

Doctrinal

Vol-1

Part - 1



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DOCTRINAL.

PART I.



SECTION I.—*Revelation.*

The Importance of Revealed Truth.

WHAT is there which doth more highly concern men to know than God Himself? or what more glorious and excellent object could He discover than Himself to the world? There is nothing certainly which should more commend the Scriptures to us, than that thereby we may grow more acquainted with God; that we may know more of His nature, and all His perfections, and many of the great reasons of His actings in the world.

We may by them understand with safety what the eternal purposes of God were as to the way of man's recovery by the death of His Son; we may there see and understand the great Wisdom of God, not only in the contrivance of the world, and ordering of it, but in the gradual revelations of Himself to His people, by what steps He trained up His Church, *till the fulness of time was come*; what His aim was in laying such a load of ceremonies on His people, the *Jews*; by what steps and degrees He made way for the full revelation of His will to the world by speaking in these last days by His Son, after He had spoken *at sundry times and in divers manners by the prophets unto the fathers*. In the Scriptures we read the most rich and admirable discoveries of Divine goodness and all the ways and methods He useth in alluring sinners to Himself; with what majesty He commands; with what condescension He intreats; with what importunity he woos men's souls to be reconciled to Him; with what favor He embraceth; with what tenderness He chaseth; with what bowels He pitieth those

who have chosen Him to be their God; with what power He supporteth; with what wisdom He directeth; with what cordials He refresheth the souls of such who are dejected under the sense of His displeasure, and yet their love is sincere towards Him! With what profound humility, what holy boldness, what becoming distance, and yet what restless importunity do we therein find the souls of God's people addressing themselves to Him in prayer! With what cheerfulness do they serve Him; with what confidence do they trust Him; with what resolution do they adhere to Him in all straits and difficulties; with what patience do they submit to His will in their greatest extremities! How fearful are they of sinning against God; how careful to please Him; how regardless of suffering, when they must choose either that or sinning; how little apprehensive of men's displeasure, while they enjoy the favor of God! Now all these things, which are so fully and pathetically expressed in Scripture, do abundantly set forth to us the exuberancy and *pleonasm* of God's grace and goodness towards His people, which makes them delight so much in Him, and be so sensible of His displeasure. But above all other discoveries of God's goodness, His sending His Son into the world to die for sinners is that which Scripture sets forth with the greatest life and eloquence. By eloquence, I mean not an artificial composition of words, but the gravity, weight, and persuasiveness of the matter contained in them. And what can tend more to melt our frozen hearts into a current of thankful obedience to God than the vigorous reflection of the

beams of God's love through *Jesus Christ* on us? Was there ever so great an expression of love heard of? Nay, was it possible to be imagined, that that God who perfectly hates sin should Himself offer the pardon of it, and send His Son into the world to secure it to the sinner, who doth so heartily repent of his sins, as to deny himself, and take up his cross and follow *Christ*? Well might the Apostle say, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners* (1 Tim. i. 15). How dry and sapless are all the discourses of philosophers, compared with this sentence! How jejune and unsatisfactory are all the discoveries they had of God and His goodness, in comparison of what we have by the Gospel of Christ! Well might Paul then say, *That he determined to know nothing but Christ, and Him crucified*. *Christ crucified* is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. This is the only library which is the true *ταρπειον ψυχης*, that which cures the soul of all its maladies and distempers: other knowledge makes men's minds giddy and flatulent; this settles and composes them: other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves; this brings them to the truest view of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety: other knowledge leaves men's hearts as it found them; this alters them and makes them better.

So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of *Christ crucified* above the sublimest speculations in the world; and is not this an inestimable benefit we enjoy by the Scripture, that therein we can read and converse with all these expressions of God's love and goodness, and that in His own language? Shall we admire and praise what we meet with in heathen philosophers which is generous and handsome? and shall we not adore the infinite fulness of the Scriptures, which run over with continued expressions of that and a higher nature? What folly is it to magnify those *lean kine*, the notions of philosophers, and condemn *the fat*, the plenty and fulness of the Scriptures! If there be not far more valuable and excellent discoveries of the Divine nature and perfections; if there be not far more excellent directions and rules of practice in the Sacred Scriptures, than in the sublimest of

all the philosophers; then let us leave our *full ears*, and feed upon *the thin*. But certainly no sober and rational spirit that puts any value upon the knowledge of God, but on the same account that he doth praise the discourses of any philosophers concerning God, he cannot but set a value of a far higher nature on the word of God. And as the goodness of God is thus discovered in Scripture, so is His Justice and Holiness: we have therein recorded the most remarkable judgments of God upon contumacious sinners, the severest denunciations of a judgment to come against all that live in sin, the exactest precepts of holiness in the world; and what can be desired more to discover the holiness of God than we find in Scripture concerning Him? If therefore acquaintance with the Nature, Perfections, Designs of so excellent a being as God is, be a thing desirable to human nature, we have the greatest cause to admire the excellency, and adore the fulness of the Scriptures, which give us so large, rational, and complete an account of the being and attributes of God.

BP. STILLINGFLEET.

THE light of nature is never able to find out any way of obtaining the reward of bliss, but by performing exactly the duties and works of righteousness. From salvation therefore and life, all flesh being excluded this way, behold how the wisdom of God hath revealed a way mystical and supernatural, a way directing unto the same end of life, by a course which groundeth itself upon the guiltiness of sin, and through sin, desert of condemnation and death. For in this way, the first thing is the tender compassion of God, respecting us drowned and swallowed up in misery; the next is redemption out of the same, by the precious death and merit of a mighty Saviour, which hath witnessed of Himself, saying, *I am the way*; the way that leadeth us from misery into bliss. This supernatural way had God in Himself prepared before all worlds. The way of supernatural duty which to us He hath prescribed, our Saviour in the Gospel of St. John doth note, terming it by an excellency, the work of God: *this is the work of God, that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent*. Not that God doth require nothing unto happiness at the hands of men, saving only a naked belief (for hope and charity we may not exclude); but that without belief all

other things are as nothing, and it the ground of those other divine virtues. Concerning faith, the principal object whereof is, that eternal verity which hath discovered the treasures of hidden wisdom in Christ; concerning hope, the highest object whereof is, that everlasting goodness which in Christ doth quicken the dead; concerning charity, the final object whereof is, that incomprehensible beauty which shineth in the countenance of Christ the Son of the living God; concerning these virtues, the first of which beginning here with a weak apprehension of things not seen, endeth with the intuitive vision of God in the world to come; the second beginning here with a trembling expectation of things far removed, and as yet but only heard of, endeth with real and actual fruition of that which no tongue can express; the third beginning here with a weak inclination of heart towards Him, unto whom we are not able to approach, endeth with endless union; the mystery whereof is higher than the reach of the thoughts of men; concerning that faith, hope and charity, without which there can be no salvation; was there ever any mention made saving only in that law which God Himself hath from heaven revealed? There is not in the world a syllable muttered with certain truth concerning any of these three, more than hath been supernaturally received from the mouth of the Eternal God. Laws therefore concerning these things are supernatural, both in respect of the manner of delivering them, which is divine; and also in regard of the things delivered, which are such as have not in nature any cause from which they flow, but were by the voluntary appointment of God ordained, besides the course of nature, to rectify nature's obliquity withal.

When supernatural duties are necessarily exacted, natural are not rejected as needless. The law of God therefore is, though principally delivered for instruction in the one, yet fraught with precepts of the other also. The Scripture is fraught even with laws of nature; insomuch that Gratian, defining natural right, (whereby is meant the right, which exacteth those general duties that concern men naturally, even as they are men,) termeth natural right that which the books of the Law and the Gospel do contain. Neither is it vain, that the Scripture aboundeth with so great

store of laws in this kind; for they are either such as we of ourselves could not easily have found out, and then the benefit is not small, to have them readily set down to our hands; or if they be so clear and manifest, that no man endued with reason can lightly be ignorant of them, yet the Spirit, as it were, borrowing them from the school of nature, as serving to prove things less manifest, and to induce a persuasion of somewhat which were in itself more hard and dark, unless it should in such sort be cleared, the very applying of them unto cases particular is not without most singular use and profit many ways for men's instruction. Besides, be they plain of themselves or obscure, the evidence of God's own testimony added unto the natural assent of reason, concerning the certainty of them, doth not a little comfort and confirm the same. Wherefore, inasmuch as our actions are conversant about things beset with many circumstances, which cause men of sundry wits to be also of sundry judgments concerning that which ought to be done; requisite it cannot but seem the rule of divine law should herein help our imbecility, that we might the more infallibly understand what is good, and what evil. The first principles of the law of nature are easy; hard it were to find men ignorant of them: but concerning the duty which nature's law doth require at the hands of men in a number of things particular, so far hath the natural understanding even of sundry whole nations been darkened, that they have not discerned, no, not gross iniquity to be sin. Again, being so prone as we are to fawn upon ourselves, and to be ignorant as much as may be of our own deformities, without the feeling sense whereof we are most wretched; even so much the more, because not knowing them, we cannot as much as desire to have them taken away; how should our festered sores be cured, but that God hath delivered a law as sharp as the two-edged sword, piercing the very closest and most unsearchable corners of the heart, which the law of nature can hardly, human laws by no means possibly reach unto? Hereby we know even secret concupiscence to be sin, and are made fearful to offend, though it be but in a wandering cogitation. Finally, of those things which are for direction of all the parts of our life needful, and not impossible to be discerned by the light of nature

itself; are there not many which few men's natural capacity, and some which no man's hath been able to find out? They are, saith St. Augustine, but a few, and they endued with great ripeness of wit and judgment, free from all such affairs as might trouble their meditations, instructed in the sharpest and the subtlest points of learning, who have, and that very hardly, been able to find out but only the immortality of the soul. The resurrection of the flesh, what man did ever at any time dream of, having not heard it otherwise than from the school of nature; whereby it appeareth, how much we are bound to yield unto our Creator, the Father of all mercy, eternal thanks for that he hath delivered his law unto the world? a law wherein so many things are laid open, clear, and manifest; as a light which otherwise would have been buried in darkness, not without the hazard; or rather not with the hazard, but with the certain loss of infinite thousands of souls, most undoubtedly now saved. . . .

By Scripture it hath, in the wisdom of God, seemed meet to deliver unto the world much, but personally expedient to be practised of certain men; many deep and profound points of doctrine, as being the main original ground whereupon the precepts of duty depend; many prophecies, the clear performance whereof might confirm the world in belief of things unseen; many histories to serve as looking-glasses to behold the mercy, the truth, the righteousness of God towards all that faithfully serve, obey and honour him; yea, many entire meditations of piety, to be as patterns and precedents in cases of like nature; many things needful for explication, many for application unto particular occasions, such as the providence of God from time to time hath taken, to have the several books of His holy ordinance written. Be it then, that together with the principal necessary laws of God, there are sundry other things written, whereof we might haply be ignorant, and yet be saved! What! shall we hereupon think them needless? shall we esteem them as riotous branches, wherewith we sometimes behold most pleasant vines overgrown? Surely, no more than we judge our hands or our eyes superfluous, or what part soever; which if our bodies did want, we might notwithstanding any such defect, retain still the complete being of men. As therefore a complete man is

neither destitute of any part necessary, and hath some parts whereof, though the want could not deprive him of his essence, yet to have them, standeth him in singular stead in respect of the special uses for which they serve: in like sort, all those writings which contain in them the law of God, all those venerable books of Scripture, all those sacred tomes and volumes of holy writ; they are with such absolute perfection framed, that in them there neither wanteth any thing, the lack whereof might deprive us of life; nor any thing in such wise aboundeth, that as being superfluous, unfruitful, and altogether needless, we should think it no loss or danger at all, if we did want it. HOOKER.

Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures.

Two things are included in the expression canonical. First, the spring and original of any book, which gives it authority; and secondly, the design and end of it, which renders it canonical. For the first, it is required that it be *given by immediate inspiration from God*; without this, no book or writing can by any means, any acceptance, or approbation of the church, any usefulness, any similitude of style, or manner of writing to the books that are so, any conformity in matter or doctrine to them, have an interest in that authority that should lay a foundation for its reception into the canon. It is the impress of the authority of God Himself on any writing, or its proceeding immediately from Him, that is sufficient for this purpose. Neither yet will this alone suffice to render any revelation or writing absolutely canonical in the sense explained. There may be an especial revelation from God, or a writing by His inspiration, like that sent by Elijah unto Jehoram the king of Judah, 2 Chron. xxi. 12, which being referred only unto some particular occasion, and having thence authority for some especial end and purpose, yet being not designed for a rule of faith and obedience unto the church, may not belong unto the canon of the Scripture. But when unto the original of divine inspiration this end also is added, that it is designed by the Holy Ghost for the catholic standing use and instruction of the church, then any writing or book becomes absolutely and completely canonical.

The Jews of later ages assign some difference among the books of the Old Tes-

tament, as to their spring and original, or manner of revelation, though they make none as to their being all canonical. The book of the Law they assign unto a peculiar manner of revelation which they call פה אל פה or פנים אל פנים *mouth to mouth*, or *face to face*, which they gather from Num. xii. 8. Others of them they affirm to proceed from נבואה, or the *gift of prophecy*. Of this gift of prophecy they make many kinds or degrees, taken from the different means used by God in the application of Himself unto them, belonging to the *πνευματισμός* of divine revelation mentioned by the apostle, Heb. i. 1. And they divide those books into two parts, namely, the *former prophets*, containing most of the historical books after the end of the law; and the *latter prophets*, wherein they comprise the most of them peculiarly so called. The original of the remainder of them they ascribe unto *inspiration of the Holy Ghost*, calling them peculiarly *written*, by that inspiration; as though the whole canon and system of the books were not the *Scripture*, or writing, and *Θεοπνευστία* or *divine inspiration*, the only means of their writing. But they do herein as in many other things.

The distribution of the books of the Old Testament, into the law, psalms, and prophets, was very ancient in their church. We have mention of it, Luke xxiv. 44, *that are written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the psalms*, that is, in the whole canonical Scripture. And it is evident that this distribution is taken from the subject matter of those principal parts of it. This distribution they have by tradition, but not knowing, or neglecting the reason of it, they have feigned the rise of it in a different manner of revelation, and cast the particular books arbitrarily under what heads they pleased. This is evident from sundry of them which they reckon unto the "*Hagiographa*," which are with them of least esteem. But we have a more sure rule, both overthrowing that feigned distinction, and perfectly equalising all parts of divine Scripture as to their spring and original. St. Peter calls the whole, 2 Pet. i. 19, *the word of prophecy*; and, ver. 20, *prophecy*, and therefore it belongs not unto any peculiar part of it, to be given out by prophecy, which is a property of the whole. And St. Paul also terms the whole Scrip-

ture *γραφαι προφητικαι*, Rom. xvi. 26, *prophetical Scriptures*, or writings of the prophets. And when he demanded of Agrippa whether he believed the Scriptures, he doth it in the same manner, Acts xxvi. 27, *Believest thou the prophets?* that is, the Scriptures, written by the spirit of prophecy, or by the inspiration (1 Pet. i. 11) *of the Spirit of Christ that was in them*. God of old spake, *εν τοις προφηταις*, Heb. i. 1, in His revelation of Himself unto them and in them, and *equally spake δια στοματος των δλων των απ' αιωνος προφητων*, Luke i. 70, unto them, *by the mouth of His holy prophets from the beginning*. And thus, not this, or that part, but *πασα γραφη θεοπνευστος*, 2 Tim. iii. 16, *all Scripture was given by inspiration*. And herein all the parts, or books of it are absolutely equal. And in the giving out of the whole, 2 Pet. i. 21, *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. So that whatever different means God at any time might make use of in the communication of His mind and will unto any of the prophets or penmen of the Scripture, it was this *θεοπνευστία*, and being acted by the Holy Ghost, both as to things and words, that rendered them infallible revealers of Him unto the church. And thus the foundation of the canonical authority of the books of the Scripture is absolutely the same in and unto them all, without the least variety, either from any difference in kind or degree.

The interest of any book or writing in the canon of the Scripture accrues unto it, as hath been shown, merely from its divine inspiration, and from being given by the Holy Ghost for a rule, measure, and standard of faith and obedience unto the church. Therefore, whatever advantage or worth to commend it any writing may have, yet, if it have not the properties mentioned of divine inspiration and confirmation, it differs in the whole kind, and not in degrees only, from all those that have them. It cannot then be any part *regulæ regulantis*, but *regulata* at the best, not having *αυθεντιαν*, or a *self-credibility* on its own account, or *αυθεντειαν*, a *self-sufficing authority*, but is truth only materially by virtue of its analogy unto that which is absolutely, universally, and perfectly so. And this was well observed by Lindanus,* *They defile them-*

* Lindan. Panopl. Evang. l. iii. c. 4.

selves with the impiety of sacrilege (he says) who endeavour to bring in, as it were, divers degrees into the body of the Scriptures; for by the impious discretion of human folly, they would cast the one voice of the Holy Ghost into various forms of unequal authority. As then whatever difference there may be as to the subject-matter, manner of writing, and present usefulness, between any of the books, which being written by divine inspiration, are given out for the church's rule, they are all equal as to their canonical authority, being equally interested in that which is the formal reason of it; so whatever usefulness or respect in the church any other writing may have, it can in no way receive an interest in that, whose formal reason it is not concerned in.

DR. JOHN OWEN.

IN what manner the influence, by which the penmen of the Scriptures were directed, affected them, we pretend not fully to explain. It is enough for us to know, that thereby they were infallibly guided and determined to declare what they did not formerly know; to conceive properly of what they had formerly known; and to express their subject in terms absolutely just in themselves, and calculated to convey the truths represented to others. But so far we may conclude, that, while the penmen exercised their own reason and judgment; Psal. xlv. 1; Mark xii. 36; Luke i. 3; Acts i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 11; the Holy Ghost (1) Effectually stirred them up to write; 2 Pet. i. 21. (2) Appointed to each his proper share or subject correspondent with his natural talents, and the necessities of the church in his time; 2 Pet. i. 21; Mat. xxv. 15. (3) Enlightened their minds, and gave them a duly distinct view of the truths which they were to deliver; Jer. i. 11-16, and xiii. 9-14; Ezek. iv. 4-8; Dan. x. 1, 14; and ix. 22-27; and viii. 15-19; and xii. 8; Amos vii. 7, 8; and viii. 2; Zech. i. 19, 21, and iv. 11-14; and v. 6; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11; Eph. iii. 3, 4; John xvi. 13. Perhaps this illumination was given all at once to Paul, when caught up to the third heaven, but was bestowed gradually on the other apostles; Mark iv. 34; Luke xxiv. 17, 45; John xx. 22; Acts ii. 4, and x. 9-15, 28, 34. (4) He strengthened and refreshed their memories to recollect whatever they had seen or heard, which he judged pro-

per to be inserted in their writings; John xiv. 26; Luke i. 3; Jer. xxxi. 3. (5) Amidst a multitude of facts, he directed them to write precisely what was proper for the edification of the church, and neither more nor less; John xx. 30, 31; and xxi. 25; Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 6-11; Rom. iv. 23, 24. (6) He excited in their minds such images and ideas as had been treasured up in their memories, and directed them to other ends and purposes than themselves would ever have done of their own accord. Thus, under inspiration, Amos draws his figures from herds, flocks, and fields; Paul makes use of his classical learning; Amos i-ix.; Acts xvii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 33; Tit. i. 12. (7) He immediately suggested and imprinted on their minds such things as could not be known by reason, observation, or information, but were matters of pure revelation; Is. xlvi. 9, 10; xli. 22, 23; and xlv. 21; whether they respected doctrines, 1 Tim. iii. 16; or facts past or future, Gen. i. ii. iii. Lev. xxvi. &c. (8) He so superintended every particular writer, as to render Himself infallible in his matter, words, and arrangements: and, by this superintending influence, made them all in connexion so write, as to render the whole Scripture, at any given period, a sufficient infallible rule to direct men to true holiness and everlasting happiness; Deut. viii. 4; Psal. xix. 7-11; cxix. and i. 2; John v. 39; Mat. xxii. 29; Luke xvi. 29, 31; Rom. xv. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 15-17; 2 Pet. i. 19. Many of the sentences recorded in Scripture are not inspired in themselves, being the words of Satan or of wicked men; but the Scripture report relative to these expressions is directed by divine inspiration.

REV. JOHN BROWN.

AND he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus (Mark x. 50). Shall we say that the Evangelist wrote without thought, when he related the man's casting away his garment, and leaping and coming to Jesus? and shall we dare to say that these things were inserted in the Gospels in vain? For my part, I believe that not one jot or tittle of the divine instruction is in vain. Are men to say that there is any thing impertinent or superfluous in the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, though to some they may seem obscure? But we are to turn the eyes of our mind

to Him who commanded these things to be written, and seek of Him the interpretation of them. The sacred books came from the fulness of the Spirit; so that there is nothing in the Prophets, or the Law, or the Gospel, or the Apostles, which descends not from the fulness of the Divine Majesty.

ORIGEN.*

Evidences of the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

THAT our books of the Old and New Testaments, the Apocryphal Tracts being excluded from both, are of an infallible and divine original, is thus evident :

I. The subject matter of them requires a divine inspiration. The history of the creation, and part of that of the flood, &c. therein related, were known only to God. Mysteries relative to the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; the covenant of grace; the incarnation of the Son of God; His undertaking, offices, and states, and our union with Him; justification, adoption, sanctification, spiritual comfort, and eternal blessedness, in Him, are therein declared; which God only could comprehend or discover. The scheme of religion therein prescribed is so pure and benevolent, that God alone could devise or appoint it. While it represents the Most High as every where present, as infinitely perfect, powerful, wise, and good, holy, just, and true—an infinitely gracious lover of righteousness, and hater of iniquity,—as our bountiful Creator and Preserver, and as the infinitely merciful Redeemer of our souls, by the obedience and death of His only-begotten Son,—it requires us to know, believe in, and revere Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, as our Father, Friend, Husband, Saviour, and Portion in Christ; and confidently to depend on Him, and ask from Him whatever we need in time or eternity; and to obey Him in all that He commands, as children whom He hath begotten again to a lively hope, and established as the heirs of His everlasting inheritance. We are here taught how human nature may be truly improved and perfected,* by our receiving Jesus Christ as made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,—as an effectual principle and root of true holiness;—and by our walking in Him by faith, denying ungodliness

and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly, patiently, contentedly, and cheerfully,—setting our affections upon things above, where Christ is, and through the Spirit mortifying every sinful and selfish inclination. We are taught to love our neighbours as ourselves,—perfectly fulfilling the particular duties of every relative station; and to lay aside all malice, envy, hatred, revenge, or other malevolent dispositions or passions; to love our enemies, to render good for evil, blessing for cursing, and to pray for them that despitefully use us. These laws of universal purity and benevolence are prescribed with an authority proper only to God, and extended to such a compass and degree as God alone can demand; and those sins are forbidden which God alone can observe or prohibit. The most powerful motives to duty, and dissuaves from vice, are here most wisely proposed, and powerfully urged; motives drawn from the nature, the promises, the threatenings, the mercies, and the judgments of God; particularly from His kindness in the work of our redemption, and His new covenant relations to us in Christ; and from advantages or disadvantages, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. And, while the most excellent means of directing and exciting to, and of exercising piety and virtue, are established in the most prudent forms and authoritative manner, the most perfect and engaging patterns of holiness and virtue are set before us in the example of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and of God as reconciled in Him, and reconciling the world to Himself; Exod. xx. 1-17; Lev. xviii-xx. Deut. iv-xxv. Mat. v-vii. Rom. vi. xii-xv. Gal. v. vi. Eph. iv-vi. Col. iii. iv. 1 Thess. v. Tit. ii. James i-v. 1 Pet. i-v. 2 Pet. i. 1 John i-v. &c. &c.

II. The manner in which these subjects are exhibited in the Scriptures is evidently divine;—wise, condescending, and yet majestic. The discoveries have been gradual, as men stood in need of them, or were in a proper condition to receive them; Gen. iii. ix. xii. xvii. &c. Heb. i. 1. The principal points; as of God's new covenant grant of Himself to sinful men; His full satisfaction in and with Christ as our Mediator; and the law of the ten commandments; were declared from heaven with uncommon solemnity; Mat. iii. 17; and xvii. 5; Exod. xx. 1-18, &c. And while these and other similar truths are un-

* Haldane's Evid. and Auth. of Div. Rev. i. 146.

nounced in a style the most plain and simple, there appears therein something astonishingly sublime and majestic. While the dictates are authorised with a *thus saith the Lord*, the very style, particularly in Scripture songs, Job, Psalms, Lamentations, and Isaiah, and in our Saviour's discourses, &c. is at once surprisingly suited to the dignity of the Author, the nature of the subject, and the condition of the persons addressed.

III. The manifest scope of the Scriptures is to render sin loathsome and hated, and to promote holiness and virtue—to humble men, and reform them from their beloved lusts and sinful practices, and to exalt and glorify God to the highest. No good angel or man could dare to personate God in the manner of the Scriptures: nor could bad angels or men publish, and so warmly inculcate, what is so remarkably contrary to their own vicious inclinations and honor. It therefore remains that God alone must be the Author and Inditer of them.

IV. Notwithstanding the dictates of Scripture are so extremely contrary to the natural inclinations of mankind, and were published without any concert by various persons, of very different conditions, and in different ages and places, yet such is the marvellous harmony of all the parts, in their whole matter and scope, as irrefragably demonstrates that these penmen must all have been directed by the same Spirit of God. One part of our Bible is so connected with, and tends to the establishment of another, that we cannot reasonably receive any part without receiving the whole. In the New Testament we have the historical narrative of the fulfilment of the typical and verbal predictions of the Old. In both Testaments, the subsequent books, or subsequent parts of a book, are connected with that which went before, as a narrative of the execution of a scheme begun, or of the fulfilment of a prophecy declared. If we receive the history, we must also receive the prediction. If we admit the prediction, we must believe the history. To a diligent searcher of the Scriptures, it cannot fail to occasion a most pleasant astonishment, to find every where the same facts supposed, related, or prepared for; the same doctrines of a gracious redemption through Jesus Christ exhibited, or supposed to be true; the same rules or exemplifications of piety

and virtue, and motives thereto; the same promises of mercy, or threatenings of just misery, to persons, societies, or nations, exhibited without a single contradiction. When there is an appearance of contradiction, it will be found that the different passages do not respect the same thing or person, in the same respect, and in the same circumstances of time, place, or manner; and so there is no contradiction at all.

V. The manifest character of the penmen farther evinces the divine original of the Scriptures. They every where discover the utmost candour and disinterestedness: they every where candidly publish the infirmities, or even faults of themselves, their friends, and nation. None of them ever gained any thing in this world by their work but trouble and vexation: and, according to their own principles, they could obtain nothing in the next but everlasting destruction, if they indulged themselves in any imposture. The matter and manner of their work infinitely transcended their abilities. Setting their predictions aside for a moment, how could men of the best education, and especially men of no education, form such exalted schemes of sense, piety, and virtue? Or how could wicked men, inspired by Satan, publish and prosecute such a scheme of mystery, holiness, and morality? Such is the character of Jesus Christ, drawn by the four Evangelists, with every mark of simplicity and candour, and in which ignominious suffering is made a leading article, that the delineation thereof, and that too by persons of no uncommon knowledge, without a real and exactly answerable model, would, to every unbiassed freethinker, appear more incredible and impossible than even the incarnation, obedience, and death of the Son of God, therein attested, however astonishing.

VI. The providence of God has, in a most marvellous manner, preserved the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments from being lost or corrupted. While perhaps millions of other books, once of considerable fame in the world, and which no one sought to extirpate, are lost and forgotten, the Scriptures, though more early written, and though Satan and his agents unnumbered have hated them, and sought to cause their memory to perish from among men, or to corrupt them, still

remain, and remain in their purity. In great wisdom and kindness, God, for their preservation, ordered an original copy to be laid up in the holy of holies; Deut. xxxi. 26; and that every Hebrew king should write but a copy for himself; Deut. xvii. 18; and appointed the careful and frequent reading of them, both in private and public. With astonishing kindness and wisdom has He made the contending parties who had access to the Scriptures—such as the Jews and Israelites, the Jews and Samaritans, the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Jews and Christians, and the various parties of Christians—mutual checks upon each other for almost three thousand years past, that they might not be able either to extirpate or to corrupt any part of them. When the Christians had almost utterly lost the knowledge of the Hebrew originals, God, by His providence, stirred up the Jewish rabbins to an uncommon labor for preserving them in their purity, by marking the number of letters, and how often each was repeated in their Masoras. By what tremendous judgments did He restrain and punish Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syro-Grecian king; Dioclesian, the Roman emperor; and others who attempted to destroy the copies of Scripture, in order to extirpate the Jewish or Christian religion! And He has bestowed amazing support and consolation on such as have risked or parted with their lives rather than deny the dictates of Scripture, or in the least contribute to their extirpation or misinterpretation. By quickly multiplying the copies or the readers of the Scriptures, He rendered it impossible to corrupt them in any thing important, without causing the corruption all at once to start up into every copy dispersed through the world, and into the memories of almost every reader;—than which nothing could be more absurd to suppose. Nay, it is observable that, of all the thousands of various readings which the learned have collected, not one in the least enervates any point of our faith or duty towards God or man.

VII. Multitudes of miracles, which only the infinite power of God could effect, have been wrought for the confirmation of the doctrines and facts mentioned in the Scriptures, and for evincing the divine mission of the principal publishers thereof. The wisdom and goodness of God required Him, especially when, in the days of Moses

and Christ, He was establishing a new form of worship, to mark the important declarations of His will with some distinguishing characteristics, awakening to consideration. Nothing appears more proper for this end than a series of uncontrolled miracles which no power could check, and which supported nothing but what was agreeable to reason, so far as it could conceive of it. Neither reason nor experience can admit that the infinite wisdom and goodness of God could permit one, much less multitudes, of uncontrolled miracles to be wrought for the confirmation of falsehood. But the miracles wrought in confirmation of the Scriptures have every favorable circumstance that could be wished. Their number was almost beyond reckoning, and all of them calculated to answer some great and benevolent end. According to the nature of the broken law, many of those wrought by Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, were tremendous and dreadful. According to the nature of the gospel which they published, the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and his Apostles were generally of a benevolent nature and tendency. Moreover, most of the miracles mentioned in Scripture were performed in so public a manner, that both friends and foes had the fullest access to a thorough examination of their nature and certainty. Most of them were wrought when the concurrent circumstances of Providence loudly called mankind to observe and examine them. Most of them—as the passage of the Hebrews through the Red Sea and through Jordan; the forty years' sustenance of the people in the Arabian desert, by manna from heaven, and water from a rock; the stoppage or retrograde motion of the sun; the feeding of thousands with a few loaves and fishes; and the raising of dead persons—were of such a nature, that nothing less than absurdity itself can suppose the senses of the witnesses to have been deceived, or that any power less than divine could have produced them. Besides, all these miracles were wrought in confirmation of a religion the most holy, pure, and benevolent; and most of them by persons who were eminent patterns of virtue. And that such miracles were wrought, is in part attested by the inveterate enemies thereof, whether Jews or heathens.

VIII. The project of reforming man-

kind by the Scriptures, and the manifest success thereof, is a continued miraculous proof of their divine original. What, but a certain evidence of his divine commission could have made Moses risk his character—that on the sixth day of the week, the whole Hebrew nation in the wilderness should always find manna sufficient for two days, and that the sixth year should always produce a double crop; and, on that supposition, enact a standing law, that they should never attempt to gather manna on the seventh day, or to cultivate their fields on the seventh year. Without certain assurance of divine protection from their inveterate enemies on every hand, on those occasions, could he ever have required that all the males able to walk should, three times every year, leave their homes, and assemble to keep the sacred festivals near the middle of their country? Without manifest warrant from God, could he ever have hoped that there would be a sufficiency of males in Aaron's family to execute the priesthood for all Israel, free from all those blemishes which he marks out as excluding from that office? Without this, could he ever have hoped that the small country of Canaan could afford sustenance for his numerous nation, while they were debarred from so many kinds of eatables, and were required to give yearly so much of the product to the Lord?—The project of Christianity, and its success, are still more astonishing. Nothing less than a certain warrant and almighty influence from God could effect the one or the other. How is it possible that a few men, weak or villanous, without the smallest assistance from worldly influence, could ever form a scheme to reform the whole world from principles and practices deep rooted in their inclination, and firmly established by extensive custom, by long confirmed laws, and the high and universal authority of nations,—by mere declarations of what they thought true?—nay, by what they knew to be falsehood, if they were impostors! How could villains, or even the weakest, choose for their hero One who had been **always** condemned, and had lately been crucified **between** thieves as a noted malefactor, by the common consent of His own countrymen?—One who, if he was not God in our nature, had abused His disciples' confidence, and decoyed them into a train of temporal and eternal miseries!—One who had never

encouraged them to hope for any thing in this world, in following Him, but crosses, hatred, reproach, imprisonment, tortures, and death;—nor, if they indulged themselves in a fraudulent prosecution of their cause, for any thing in the future state but everlasting destruction! How stupendous, and absolutely incredible, that a few villanous projectors of reformation should begin their work, a few weeks after, in the very place where, and among the very multitude by whom, Jesus their hero had been ignominiously crucified; and should in the most public and undaunted manner, in the face of danger and death, avow Him to be the Son of God; and to have risen from the dead, ascended to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God; that amidst the deepest poverty, cruel hatred, calumnious reproach, and inhuman persecution from enemies, they should with unwearied zeal and cheerfulness, carry on their project, never appearing to covet any outward honor or wealth; and that they should form a system of doctrines and morals, infinitely superior, in sense and dignity, to all the productions of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and other renowned doctors of the heathen world! How astonishing is it that these few preachers, without the smallest encouragement from earthly powers, should so triumph over the craft, the rage, and power of the infuriated Jews; triumph over the pride, the policy, and power of the Roman empire, when at its full strength and maturest sagacity; over the pride of learning, and the obstinacy of ignorance, hatred, prejudice, and lust; over the hardened inclinations, deep-rooted customs, and long fixed laws of Jews and heathens; and that, contrary to every temptation from outward advantage, nay, notwithstanding every conceivable form of opposition, the gospel should, within a few years after Christ's ascension, be preached in almost every corner of the Roman empire and the countries adjacent; and that multitudes, at the hazard of every temporal loss or punishment from men, should readily believe, constantly adhere to, and cheerfully and strictly practise the same! and it is equally astonishing that, for more than seventeen hundred years, notwithstanding innumerable persecutions, together with the wickedness of professors, and the inconceivable villanies or base in-

difference of the clergy, this project has been more or less successful in reforming the hearts and lives of multitudes in almost every nation of importance under heaven.

IX. Nothing more clearly demonstrates the divine authority of the Scriptures than the exact fulfilment of the typical and verbal predictions therein exhibited, in the most circumstantial manner, hundreds or thousands of years before that fulfilment took place, or there was the smallest appearance of it. Predictions (especially as above circumstantiated) necessarily imply a looking with certainty through an infinity of possible events, and seeing and determining what shall certainly happen, and what not. Such foresight and determination can only take place in the omniscient and almighty Governor of the world, who alone can *declare the end from the beginning*. To mark the all-seeing Jehovah, the Author of Scripture, its pages are crowded with predictions, the exact fulfilment of which is recorded in the inspired and other histories written since the events took place. Almost every historical passage in our Bible is a narrative of something antecedently foretold. The New Testament is little else than a representation of the fulfilment of the types and predictions of the Old, relative to Jesus Christ and His gospel church. Nay, the histories of churches and nations, from the beginning to the end of the world, do, to a judicious observer, represent little more than the fulfilment of Scripture predictions, as to the families of Adam and Noah; the Canaanites, Amalekites, Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Syrians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Tartars, including Goths, Huns, and Turks; and especially the Jews, Jesus Christ, the New Testament church, and Antichrist; as shall be hereafter manifested. This proof drawn from the fulfilment of predictions increases in evidence more and more as that fulfilment takes place and is observed. The dispersion and misery of the Jewish nation, so long continued, or so often repeated; the progress and continuance of the gospel among the Gentiles; the long continued dominion of the popes, and the partial revolt from it at the Reformation; the past and present condition of the Turkish empire; the present state of Assyria, Chal-

dea, Arabia, Phœnicia, Canaan, Egypt, &c. in exact correspondence to Scripture predictions, are standing testimonies of the divine original of our Bibles, no less conclusive and striking than if we had miracles wrought every day.

X. Though the above arguments are sufficient to silence gainsayers, and to produce a rational conviction that the Scriptures are of divine original and authority, it is only the effectual application of them to our mind, conscience, and heart, in their self-evidencing divine light and power, which can produce a cordial and saving persuasion that they are *indeed the word of God*. But, when thus applied, this word brings along with it such light, such authority, and such sanctifying and comforting power, that there is no shutting our eyes nor hardening our hearts against it; no possibility of continuing stupid and unconcerned under it; but the whole faculties of our soul are necessarily affected with it, as indeed marked with divine evidence, and attended with almighty power; 1 Thess. i. 5, and ii. 13; John vi. 63.

REV. J. BROWN.

The Authority of Scripture, its Authenticity being acknowledged.

Now we hazard the assertion, that, with a number of professing Christians, there is not this unexcepted submission of the understanding to the authority of the Bible; and that the authority of the Bible is often modified, and in some cases superseded by the authority of other principles. One of these principles is the reason of the thing. We do not know if this principle would be at all felt or appealed to by the earliest Christians. It may perhaps by the disputations or the philosophising among converted Jews and Greeks, but not certainly by those of whom Paul said, that *not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called*. They turned from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God. There was nothing in their antecedent theology which they could have any respect for: nothing which they could confront, or bring into competition with the doctrines of the New Testament. In those days, the truth as it is in Jesus came to the mind of its disciples, recommended by its novelty; by its grandeur; by the power and recency of its evidences; and, above

all, by its vast and evident superiority over the fooleries of a degrading Paganism. . . . But we are in different circumstances. To us, these discoveries, rich and splendid as they are, have lost the freshness of novelty. The Sun of Righteousness, like the sun in the firmament, has become familiarised to us by possession. In a few ages, the human mind deserted its guidance, and rambled as much as ever in quest of new speculation. It is true, that they took a juster and a loftier flight since the days of Heathenism. But it was only because they walked in the light of revelation. They borrowed of the New Testament without acknowledgment, and took its beauties and its truths to deck their own wretched fancies and self-constituted systems. In the process of time, the delusion multiplied and extended. Schools were formed, and the ways of the Divinity were as confidently theorised upon, as the processes of chemistry, or the economy of the heavens. Universities were endowed, and natural theology took its place in the circle of the sciences. Folios were written, and the respected luminaries of a former age poured their *à priori* and their *à posteriori* demonstrations on the world. Taste, and sentiment, and imagination, grew apace; and every raw untutored principle which poetry could clothe in prettiness, or over which the hand of genius could throw the graces of sensibility and elegance, was erected into a principle of the divine government, and made to preside over the counsels of the Deity. In the mean time, the Bible, which ought to supersede all, was itself superseded. It was quite in vain to say that it was the only authentic record of an actual embassy which God had sent into the world. It was quite in vain to plead its testimonies, its miracles, and the unquestionable fulfilment of its prophecies. These mighty claims must lie over, and be suspended, till we have settled—what? the reasonableness of its doctrines. We must bring the theology of God's Ambassador to the bar of our self-formed theology. The Bible, instead of being admitted as the directory of our faith *upon its external evidences*, must be tried upon the merits of the work itself; and if our verdict be favorable, it must be brought in, not as a help to our ignorance, but as a corollary to our demonstrations. . . .

Now we do not condemn the exercise

of reason in matters of theology. It is the part of reason to form its conclusions, when it has data and evidences before it. But it is equally the part of reason to abstain from its conclusions, when these evidences are wanting. Reason can judge of the external evidences for Christianity, because it can discern the merits of human testimony; and it can perceive the truth or the falsehood of such obvious credentials as the performance of a miracle, or the fulfilment of a prophecy. But reason is not entitled to sit in judgment over those internal evidences, which many a presumptuous theologian has attempted to derive from the reason of the thing, or from the agreement of the doctrine with the fancied character and attributes of the Deity. One of the most useful exercises of reason is, to ascertain its limits, and to keep within them; to abandon the field of conjecture, and to restrain itself within that safe and certain barrier which forms the boundary of human experience. . . . After we have established Christianity to be an authentic message from God upon those historical grounds on which the reason and experience of man entitle him to form his conclusions, nothing remains for us but an unconditional surrender of the mind to the subject of the message. . . .

Let us go back to the first Christians of the Gentile world. . . . They were translated at once from the absurdities of Paganism to that Christianity which has come down to us, in the records of the evangelical history, and the epistles which their teachers addressed to them. They saw the miracles; they acquiesced in them, as satisfying credentials of an inspired Teacher; they took the whole of their religion from His mouth; their faith came by hearing, and hearing by the words of a divine Messenger. This was their process, and it ought to be ours. We do not see the miracles, but we see their reality through the medium of that clear and unsuspecting testimony which has been handed down to us. We should admit them as the credentials of an embassy from God. We should take the whole of our religion from the records of this embassy; and, renouncing the idolatry of our own self-formed conceptions, we should repair to that word, which was spoken to them that heard it, and transmitted to us by the instrumentality of

written language. The question with them was, *What hearest thou?* The question with us is, *What readest thou?* . . .

But something more remains to be done. The mind may have discernment enough to acquiesce in the speculative justness of a principle; but it may not have vigour or consistency enough to put it into execution. . . . It is not enough that the Bible be acknowledged as authentic; its authenticity must be something more than acknowledged. It must be felt, and, in act and obedience, submitted to. Let us put them to the test: *Verily I say unto you, says our Saviour, except a man shall be born again, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God.—By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.—Justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* We need not multiply quotations; but if there be any repugnance to the obvious truths which we have announced to the reader in the language of the Bible, his mind is not yet tutored to the philosophy of the subject. It may be in the way, but the final result is not yet arrived at; and though it admits the principle, that every previous opinion must give way to the supreme authority of an actual communication from God, it wants consistency and hardihood to carry the principle into accomplishment. REV. DR. CHALMERS.

The Admission of Difficulties in Scripture does not invalidate the Truth of its Authority.

WHAT then? Would you have us to admit any thing that contradicts any clear principle or evident conclusion of reason? No; I would have you act agreeably to the clear dictates of reason; it being a clear dictate of reason, that partial and imperfect views may, and often do, occasion an appearance of wrongness and absurdity, which a full comprehensive knowledge of the whole case entirely removes. These appearances of absurdities are but shadows, which are owing to a privation of light, or that the light does not diffuse itself over the whole body of truth, which has to us its dark as well as bright side. We should remember that we know many things but in part; that the most extensive understanding hath its boundaries; and that, when it is arrived at its full height,

the man cannot, however much thought he may take, add one cubit to the stature or size of it: that though we may shorten the line of our knowledge, as we may do that of our lives, by our own default, we cannot extend it beyond the period assigned by God: or if we could, it would be but labor and sorrow; the Deity sometimes being equally gracious in what He has hidden from our eyes, as in what He hath revealed to them.

After all, such an answer as this is sufficient as to most, if not all, of the objections against the main articles of our belief. And such an answer as this, plain sense, without much learning, might suggest: 'Such a moral evidence as there is for Christianity is easy to be understood; and such moral evidence is the only guide of life; that by which our conduct is influenced, and our behaviour determined in all practical cases. Upon this therefore I will rest, as God intended I should do: whereas your objections against the possibility of a general resurrection, the Redemption, the Trinity, and other fundamental doctrines, depend upon metaphysical intricacies, of which we, the bulk of mankind, are no judges at all, whether there be not some flaw in them; and the very ablest men are, it may be, but very incompetent judges. Shall I then be determined to set Revelation aside, upon the account of what I do not understand at all, and men of great reach of thought understand but in part, viz. fine-spun subtilties of disputation? Or shall I adhere to it upon the account of, what are easy to be understood, moral proofs? those very proofs, which are a light unto my paths, and direct my steps in the common pursuits of life? Whatever value you may set on your labored deductions, and a long chain of abstruse reasoning (as some do upon far-fetched and costly rarities), yet such is the goodness of God, that those arguments are generally the best which are the easiest of apprehension, as that food is so which is the easiest of digestion. Away then with your abstracted arguments against religion, by which you, the disputers of this world, can throw a studied obscurity over any great truth, however clear, and give a plausible turn to any falsehood, however palpable. They seem to me to be mere trials of skill and dexterity, and are not, I have heard, quite so good as those of an ancient philoso-

pher* against the possibility of motion, and those of a modern one† against the reality of matter: arguments however that would baffle a very wise man, though they would not convince even a very weak one. Dust they are, raised to obscure more important truths, and to dust they must return; or, after having been troublesome for a while, fall unregarded to the ground. Moral evidences, on the other hand, are suited to my capacity, and much better fitted to ensure a lasting conviction to creatures so formed as men are, than any of those specious kinds of arguing which are set up in opposition to them. They are a lantern to my feet, near at hand, and portable to my memory: whereas metaphysical proofs, be they never so good, are like the fixed stars; which, though they may enlighten beings that move in an orb much superior, afford little or no light to persons in my low situation.'

We are guilty of no immorality in supposing the reason why we cannot conquer an objection to be, not that the objection is unanswerable in itself, but that we want sufficient forces of understanding to conquer it, or perhaps sufficient skill to conduct and manage those forces we have to the best advantage: nay, in so doing we show our modesty: and it were to be wished that some great pretenders to knowledge were masters of the most valuable part of it, that part which teaches them humility; the knowledge of their total ignorance in many things; and their partial ignorance as to all the rest. But we are guilty of an immorality of a very deep dye in refusing to submit to moral certainty; it being confessedly criminal for any man to do that in any case which, if all men were to do in every other case, would interfere with the general happiness, and subvert the very pillar on which society rests.

Since the world began, no one instance can be given that any man was misled by trusting to such proofs as Christianity is confirmed by. For whoever has been misled, it was not by yielding his assent to moral evidence as such, but by yielding it when it was not perfect in its kind, when it wanted some of the ingredients which enter into that of Christianity. But num-

bers have been deceived by trusting to speculative reasonings of a finer texture; and men of superior and exalted sense have fallen into errors, from which common sense has secured the rest of mankind.

The proofs for Revelation have shone the brighter to every rational inquirer the more they have been of late canvassed, examined, and controverted; controversy and opposition having been to them what the wind is to the plumage in Indian crowns. The plumes, however beautiful, never appear to the best advantage while they continue unmoved and undisturbed: the rude disturbance and agitation of the wind sets them in variety of lights, opens and unfolds them, and calls forth into view the whole strength of their lustre, and every beauty which, during the calm, escaped the observation.

I shall conclude with observing that what hath been so often said upon the works of nature holds as true in regard to the Scriptures: viz. a superficial and slender acquaintance with them may tempt a man to infidelity; but an accurate, intimate knowledge of them, and a thorough insight into their contents, brings the mind back to a firm belief, and makes us acknowledge and adore the great Author of them.

REV. JEREMIAH SEED.

On the seeming Contradictions in Scripture.

WHERE Scriptures at first sight seem to contradict one another, we must, by a serious consideration of them, labor to discover their harmony. But if we should not be able to reconcile them, we ought not to pronounce them irreconcilable, but rather attribute a deficiency to our own understandings. There can be no real contradiction but when the different passages mean precisely the same person or thing, and precisely in the same respect and circumstance: no such contradiction is to be found in Scripture. But, where there seems to be one, either (1.) The same terms are used in a different sense in the different texts. Thus Paul directs to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, i. e. filial fear and holy awe; Phil. ii. 12. John says, there is no fear in love;—perfect love casteth out fear; i. e. slavish fear; 1 John iv. 18. The Samaritans *feared the Lord*; i. e. with a slavish dread;—and yet *feared not the Lord*; i. e.

* See Bayle's Dictionary in the article Zeno.

† Berkeley's Dialog. between Hylas and Philonous.

with a childlike, sincere, and holy awe of Him, or a right worshipping of Him; 2 Kings xvii. 32-34. It is appointed for men once to die, i. e. a temporal death; Heb. ix. 27; and yet, if any one keep Christ's sayings, he shall never see death, i. e. eternal death; John viii. 51. A man is justified, i. e. before God, in his person and state, *by faith without the deeds of the law*; Rom. iii. 28; and yet *by works a man is justified*, i. e. before men, and *not by faith only*; James ii. 24. Hatred of others is very sinful; Tit. iii. 3; and yet to hate our nearest relations, i. e. to love them less than we do Christ, is our duty; Luke xiv. 26. Or (2.) The seemingly opposite texts really treat of different subjects. Thus the Spirit of truth guided the apostles into all truth, i. e. in their doctrine; John xvi. 13: and yet Peter erred, and was to be blamed, i. e. in his practice; Gal. ii. 11-18. John Baptist was not Elias, i. e. not the prophet who lived under Ahab; John i. 21; and yet was the Elias foretold by Malachi, i. e. one in the spirit and power of the ancient Elijah; Mat. xi. 11, 12. 14. 18; Mark ix. 11-15; Luke i. 17; Mal. iv. 5. Or (3.) In the seemingly opposite texts the same subject is considered in different parts or respects. Thus believers in Christ their Head, as justified in His righteousness, and in respect of their new nature, and what they aim at and shall quickly obtain, are *all fair without spot*; Song iv. 7; Jer. i. 20; Num. xxiii. 21; 1 John iii. 9, and v. 18; and yet in themselves, and with respect to remaining corruption in them, are all *as an unclean thing—carnal, sold under sin*; Isa. lxiv. 6; Rom. vii. 14. In respect of His divine nature, Christ and His Father are one; John x. 30; 1 John v. 7. In respect of His divine person, He is His Father's equal and fellow; Phil. ii. 6; Zech. xiii. 7. But, in respect of His manhood and mediatory office, His Father is greater than He; John xiv. 28: is His Master; Isa. xlix. 3: His Head; 1 Cor. xi. 3: His God; Eph. i. 3; John xx. 17: His Creator; Jer. xxxi. 22: His Portion; Psal. xvi. 5, 6. In respect of His divine nature, Christ is the *Lord from heaven*; 1 Cor. xv. 47: *God over all*; Rom. ix. 5. In His human nature, He is the *fruit of the earth*; Isa. iv. 2; the child born; Isa. ix. 6. Or (4.) The seemingly opposite texts respect different times and places. Thus, during Christ's humiliation, the

Spirit was not, i. e. was not remarkably poured out; John vii. 39; and yet after Christ's ascension He was poured out; Acts ii. 1 Thess. i. 5. Circumcision, and other Jewish ceremonies, were long necessary duties; Gen. xvii. 9, 10; Rom. iii. 1, 2. But, after their abolition, by the incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Christ, they became sinful rites; Gal. v. 2, and iv. 9-11; Isa. lxvi. 3.

Most of the seeming contradictions in Scripture are found in the historical parts, where their connexion with the great subject or scope of Scripture is less considerable, and where the blunder of a transcriber, or of a printer, in a few letters, might be easily admitted, without really detracting from the honor of the oracles of God.—The apparent contradictions in the history appear owing to the same persons having different names, or the deed being done by different persons; to the one of which it is ascribed in one text, and to another in the other text; or deeds similar being really different. Reckoning of time is sometimes from one period, and sometimes from another; especially when some kings had, for some years, a conjunct reign with their father, and then a separate reign by themselves. Round numbers of hundreds or thousands are put for such as differed but little from them. What is not included in one reckoning is included in another, &c. Thus the sojourning of the Hebrews, from the call of Abraham to leave his native country; Gen. xii. 1; to the deliverance from Egypt, was 430 years; Exod. xii. 40, 41; Gal. iii. 17; but from the birth of Isaac to that deliverance were but 400 years; Gen. xv. 13. Jacob and his descendants, at their going down into Egypt, were in all seventy persons; Gen. xlv. 26, 27; Deut. x. 22; but excluding Joseph and his two sons, who were in Egypt before, and including eight of Jacob's daughters-in-law, they made seventy-five souls; Acts vii. 14. David by Abishai and his army, slew 18,000 Edomites, who came to assist the Syrians; or 18,000 Syrians, and also 18,000 Edomites; Joab assisted in killing 12,000 of these, or killed 12,000 besides; 2 Sam. viii. 13; 1 Chron. xviii. 12; Psal. lx. title. The Ammonites hired 32,000 Syrians, besides the 1000 from Maachab; 33,000 in all; 2 Sam. ix. 6; 1 Chron. xix. 6, 7.—Of the Syrian army were slain 7000, who fought in 700 cha-

riots, and 40,000 horsemen, and as many footmen, or 40,000 horsemen who dismounted and fought on foot; 2 Sam. x. 18; 1 Chron. xix. 17.—Adino, or Jashobeam, might slay in one battle 800, and in another 300; 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; 1 Chron. xi. 11. When David numbered the people, the men of Judah amounted to 470,000, who, with the 30,000 under their thirty mighties, made 500,000. The men of Israel amounted to 800,000, exclusive of the 288,000 standing troops, which, put together, make almost 1,100,000; 2 Sam. xxiv. 9; 1 Chron. xxi. 5, and xxvii. 1-15. —No more than three years of famine were threatened for David's numbering the people; 1 Chron. xxi. 12: but, had these been added to the three preceding years of famine for Saul's murdering the Gibeonites, they, together with the year of release, would have made seven: 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.—David gave to Araunah, or Ornan, fifty shekels of silver for the thrashing floor, and the oxen then sacrificed; 2 Sam. xxiv. 24: and afterwards bought the whole farm for six hundred shekels of gold, for the temple to be built on; 1 Chron. xxi. 25.—Solomon had 4000 stables, in which were 40,000 stalls, ten in each; or he had 4000 stalls at Jerusalem, and 40,000 in all; 1 Kings iv. 26; 2 Chron. ix. 25.—Hiram got 20 measures of oil for his family; 1 Kings v. 11: and 20,000 baths of oil for his artificers besides; 2 Chron. ii. 10. Solomon's workmen had 3300 subordinate overseers, and over these 300 more, in all 3600; 1 Kings v. 16; 2 Chron. ii. 18.—The temple was founded in the 480th year of the deliverance from Egypt; 1 Kings vi. 1: therefore the 450 years mentioned Acts xiii. 20 must either mark the time from the birth of Isaac to the settlement in Canaan, or the years of oppression mentioned in the book of Judges, must be included in the rests; or some of the latter judges must have been contemporary.—Each of the brazen pillars, at the entrance of the tabernacle, was almost eighteen cubits, which, being joined together, made thirty-five cubits for both; 1 Kings vii. 15; 2 Kings xxv. 17; Jer. lii. 21; 2 Chron. ii. 15.—The brazen sea had ordinarily no more than two thousand baths of water in it; 1 Kings vii. 26: but, if filled to the brim, it could have held 3000; 2 Chron. iv. 5.—Solomon's fleet brought him from Ophir four hundred and fifty talents in all, of which

420 were clear gain, or they brought him 420 talents at one voyage, and 450 in another; 1 Kings ix. 28; 2 Chron. viii. 18. At least in Solomon's time, there was nothing in the ark but the two tables of the law; 1 Kings viii. 9; 2 Chron. v. 10: but the pot of manna and Aaron's budding rod were once in it, or rather placed in the fore side of it; Heb. ix. 4. —King Ahaziah began his reign in the twenty-second year of his age; 2 Kings viii. 26; and in the forty-second year of the royalty of his mother's family, to which he was so like in his conduct; 2 Chron. xxii. 2.—The vessels of gold and silver were not made till after the temple itself was repaired; 2 Kings xii. 10. 14: but were afterwards formed of what metal remained; 2 Chron. xxiv. 11. 14.—Jehoiachin's release was appointed on the 25th day of the month; Jer. lii. 31: but not executed till the 27th; 2 Kings xxv. 27. —Of the two lists of the returning captives, in Ezra ii. and Neh. vii., the one may mark the numbers enrolled in order to return, and the other the numbers which actually returned.—To reconcile the apparent inconsistencies in the four gospels, nothing more is necessary but to place the passages in their proper order.

REV. J. BROWN.

An Objection to the Method in which Divine Truths are inculcated in Scripture answered.

SOME men find fault with the Scriptures because divine truths are not thrown together in regular order, as in our catechisms. But God puts not such value on men's accurate methods as they imagine them to deserve. Nor are they so subservient to His ends in the revelation of Himself as they are apt to fancy. Yet often when they think that they have brought truths into the strictest propriety of expression and order, they lose both their power and their glory. Hence is the world filled with so many lifeless, sapless, graceless, artificial declarations of divine truth, in the schoolmen and others. We may sooner squeeze water out of a pumice stone, than one drop of spiritual nourishment out of them. But how many millions of souls have received divine benefit and consolation exactly suited to their condition by those occasional occurrences of truth which they met with in the Scriptures, and which

they would never have obtained by those wise artificial arrangements which some men would fancy. Truths have their efficacy and power in our minds, not only from themselves, but from their place and position in the Scriptures. They are placed in such respects towards us, and in such connexion one with another, as their influence upon our minds greatly depends on. Artificial methodising of spiritual truths may make men ready in notions, cunning and subtle in disputations: but it is the Scripture itself in its own present arrangement which is able to make us wise unto salvation. DR. J. OWEN.

It is by no means a matter of chance, but a singular providence of God, that most of the sublime mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were propounded to us in common language, destitute of ornament; lest, had they been artfully composed on rhetorical precepts, and enriched with eloquence, their strength and efficacy might have been attributed to the false lustre and vain arrangement of words. Since, therefore, this simplicity, coarse and unpolished as it may be, does not fail to inspire us with greater respect, and more profound veneration for holy Writ, than could be produced by the polished language of orators; can we do otherwise than conclude, that the Scriptures contain a truth so clear and striking, as to maintain itself without standing in need of the artifices of eloquence to procure admiration? CALVIN.

The same Spirit, that speaks by the mouths of the prophets, must necessarily enter into our souls, to convince us that those holy men have faithfully declared what God had commanded them, Is. lix. 21. Some pious souls, hearing the ungodly murmur with impunity against the Scriptures, have grieved that they had not at hand some convincing argument to silence them immediately. But these good people are mistaken, not considering that the Holy Ghost is called a seal and an earnest to confirm the faith of believers; for until he enlighten them inwardly, their own spirit can float in uncertainty only. Let us therefore lay it down as a certain, invariable rule, that none can rest a firm and solid confidence on the Scriptures, but such as are disciples of the Holy Ghost, that is to say, such as are inwardly enlightened by his divine illumination. CALVIN.

ANTH.

VOL. I.

The internal Evidence of Scripture not confined to Men of Learning.

BUT the gospel was not given only for learned men. There are at least nineteen in twenty, if not ninety-nine in a hundred, of those for whom the Scriptures were written, that are not capable of any certain or effectual conviction of the divine authority of the Scriptures, by such arguments as learned men make use of. If men who have been brought up in heathenism must wait for a clear and certain conviction of the truth of Christianity until they have learning and acquaintance with the histories of politer nations, enough to see clearly the force of such kind of arguments, it will make the evidence of the gospel to them immensely cumbersome, and will render the propagation of the gospel among them infinitely difficult. Miserable is the condition of the Housatannuck Indians, and others, who have lately manifested a desire to be instructed in Christianity, if they can come at no evidence of the truth of Christianity sufficient to induce them to sell all for Christ, in any other way but this.

It is unreasonable to suppose that God has provided for his people no more than probable evidences of the truth of the gospel. He has with great care abundantly provided, and given them the most convincing, assuring, satisfying, and manifold evidence of his faithfulness in the covenant of grace; and as David says, *made a covenant ordered in all things and sure*. Therefore it is rational to suppose, that at the same time, he would not fail of ordering the matter so, that there should not be wanting, as great, and clear evidence, that this is his covenant, and that these promises are his promises; or, which is the same thing, that the Christian religion is true, and that the gospel is his word. Otherwise in vain are those great assurances he has given of his faithfulness in his covenant, by confirming it with his oath, and so variously establishing it by seals and pledges. For the evidence that it is his covenant, is properly the foundation on which all the force and effect of those other assurances do stand. We may therefore undoubtedly suppose and conclude, that there is some sort of evidence which God has given, that this covenant, and these promises are his, beyond all mere probability; that there

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are some grounds of assurance of it held forth, which, if we are not blind to them, tend to give a higher persuasion than any arguing from history, human tradition, &c. which the illiterate and unacquainted with history are capable of; yea, that which is good ground of the highest and most perfect assurance, that mankind have in any case whatsoever, agreeable to those high expressions which the apostle uses, Heb. x. 22, *Let us draw near in full assurance of faith.* And Col. ii. 2, *That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* It is reasonable to suppose, that God would give the greatest evidence of those things which are greatest, and the truth of which is of greatest importance to us: and that we therefore, if we are wise, and act rationally, shall have the greatest desire of having full, undoubting, and perfect assurance of. But it is certain, that such an assurance is not to be attained by the greater part of them who live under the gospel, by arguments fetched from ancient traditions, histories, and monuments.

And if we come to fact and experience, there is not the least reason to suppose that one in a hundred of those who have been sincere Christians, and have had a heart to sell all for Christ, have come by their conviction of the truth of the gospel this way. If we read over the histories of the many thousands that died martyrs for Christ, since the beginning of the Reformation, and have cheerfully undergone extreme tortures in a confidence of the truth of the gospel, and consider their circumstances and advantages; how few of them were there, that we can reasonably suppose, ever came by their assured persuasion this way; or indeed for whom it was possible, reasonably to receive so full and strong an assurance, from such arguments! Many of them were weak women and children, and the greater part of them illiterate persons, many of whom had been brought up in popish ignorance and darkness, and were but newly come out of it, and lived and died in times wherein those arguments for the truth of Christianity, from antiquity and history, had been but very imperfectly handled. And indeed it is but very lately that these arguments have been set in a clear and convincing

light, even by learned men themselves: and since it has been done, there never were fewer thorough believers among those who have been educated in the true religion; infidelity never prevailed so much, in any age, as in this, wherein these arguments are handled to the greatest advantage. . . . But yet it must be noted, that among those who have a spiritual sight of the divine glory of the gospel, there is a great variety of degrees of strength of faith, as there is a vast variety of the degrees of clearness of views of this glory; but there is no true and saving faith, or spiritual conviction of the judgment of the truth of the gospel, that has nothing in it of this manifestation of its internal evidence, in some degree. The gospel of the blessed God does not go abroad begging for its evidence, so much as some think; it has its highest and most proper evidence in itself. Yet great use may be made of external arguments; they are not to be neglected but highly prized and valued; for they may be greatly serviceable to awaken unbelievers, and bring them to serious consideration, and to confirm the faith of true saints: yea, they may be in some respects subservient to the begetting of a saving faith in men.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

The Scriptures are the Property of the Poor and Unlearned, as well as of the Great and Learned.

CHRIST saith (Luke xi.), *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* And again (Mat. xi.), *Come unto me all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you.* The prophet saith (Joel ii.), *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* These be the words of God; what darkness is in them? what eye so simple, but he may see them?

The ways of the Lord are straight, and his words plain even unto the simple. Chrysostom saith, 'All things are clear and plain in the holy Scriptures. Whatsoever things there are necessary for us are also manifest.' Some things are covered, as men cover precious stones and precious garments; they are covered, and yet we see them; we see them, and yet they are covered; yet all things that are necessary are plain and open.

Clemens saith, 'The word of God is hid from no man; it is a light common

unto all men; there is no darkness in God's word.' Mark, it is a common light, and shineth to all men; it is as bright and beautiful as the sun; there is no dungeon or darkness in it. So saith Irenæus: 'The Scriptures are plain, and without doubtfulness, and may be heard indifferently of all men.' All men may hear them, even all sorts of men without exception.

Where be they then which say it is not lawful for the people to have the word of God, and that the Scriptures are not meet for their reading? They are bread; they are drink; they nourish unto everlasting life. Great cruelty it is to starve God's people to death. Are they unfit to have the Scriptures, because they be poor? Christ saith (Matt. xi.) *The poor receive the glad tidings of the gospel.* And (Matt. v.), *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:* they want riches, and worldly glory, but God giveth his fear and grace to them, as well as to the rich.

Are they unfit to read the Scriptures, because they are not bred up in other learning? St. Paul saith (1 Cor. ii.), *I esteemed not to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* The prophet David saith (Psal. xciv.), *Blessed is the man, O Lord, whom thou teachest in thy law.* And Christ saith (Matt. xi.), *Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto babes.* The apostles were sent into all the world to preach the gospel unto every creature, to learned and unlearned, to poor and rich. There is no man too poor, none too rich, none too young, none too old. Whosoever hath ears to hear, he hath learning enough to be a hearer.

As for the wisest and learned men in matters of this world, they have not always proved the readiest and most willing to set forth the glory of God: they have not been the meetest scholars for this school. Who were they that resisted Moses and Aaron, the servants of God? Not the people, but the wisest and best learned in Egypt. Who were they that stood against Elias? Not the people, but the learned and wise men, and the prophets and priests of Baal. Who were they that stoned and killed the prophets? Not the people, but the chiefest and wisest in Israel. Who were they that resisted Christ and

his gospel, and sought to deface the glory of God? Not the people, but the scribes, and pharisees, and high-priests, and all the troop of their clergy. They called Christ a deceiver, and Beelzebub, a companion of publicans and harlots; they lay in wait every where to entrap him; they sued him to death.

St. Paul saith for conclusion in this manner (1 Cor. i.), *It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made the wisdom of this world foolishness? For seeing the world by wisdom knew not God, in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed.—Brethren, you see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty things; and vile things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen.*

Mark, saith he, how mercifully God hath dealt with you. Few of the learned sort, few such as are counted wise, embrace the gospel with you, or join with you in faith, or keep you company. God hath let them be deceived in their wisdom; they take themselves to be wise, and yet are become fools, and contrary to worldly judgment. God hath made you, which were weak and simple, and of no reputation, wise and righteous, and sanctified and redeemed in Christ Jesus. And Christ saith (Matt. xviii.), *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Therefore the godly father Chrysostom calleth upon the people to read and hear the Scriptures. 'Hear me, ye men of the world; get ye the Bible, that most wholesome remedy for the soul; if ye will nothing else, yet at the least get the New Testament, St. Paul's Epistles, the Gospels, and the Acts, that they may be your continual and earnest teachers.' And again: 'Hearken not hereto, only here in the church, but also at home; let the husband with the wife, let the father with the child, talk together of these matters, and both to and fro, let them both inquire, and

give their judgments; and would God they would begin this good custom!

In like sort saith Origen: 'Would God we would all do accordingly as it is written, search the Scriptures! It were a token that we do love Christ. Then would the Father love us, and Christ would love us, and show himself unto us; and he and his Father would come unto us, and dwell in us.'

Chrysostom saith: 'This is the cause of all ill, that the Scriptures are not known. To know nothing of God's laws (saith he in another place) is the loss of salvation; ignorance hath brought in heresies and vicious life; ignorance hath turned all things upside down.'

St. Jerome, expounding those words of the apostle, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plenteously*, saith, 'Here we are taught, that the lay people ought to have the word of God, not only sufficiently, but also with abundance, and to teach and counsel one another.'

And now to conclude what the learned fathers and ancient doctors have said in these matters. Theodoretus saith, 'Ye may commonly see, that our doctrine is known not only of them that are the doctors of the church, and the masters of the people, but also even of the tailors, and smiths, and weavers, and of all artificers; yea, and farther also of women, and that not only of them that be learned, but also of labouring women, and sewsters, and servants, and handmaids; neither only the citizens, but also the country folks do very well understand the same. Ye may find, yea, even the very ditchers, and delvers, and cow-herds, and gardeners, disputing of the Holy Trinity, and of the creation of all things.'

Thus we see there was a time, before ignorance crept into the church, and got the upper hand, when the word of God was not counted hard, and dark, and doubtful; when children, and women, and servants, and men of the country, had the knowledge of God, and were able to reason of the works of God. Then went it well with them; they could not easily be deceived, because they had that word which bewrayeth the thief; they carried with them like good exchangers the weights and touchstone, and were able to try coins whether they were true or false. Such were the people, such was the state of God's church in those days.

Gold, and silver, and lands, and possessions, are the portions but of few; they are not common to all alike. The wise man saith (Prov. xix.), *House and riches come by inheritance of the fathers*. But the word of God, the law and prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the gift of the Spirit, and the knowledge of God, are given unto all men; they are made common for all men.

If the word were ordained but for a few, then Christ was given unto the world but for a few; the heaven was made but for a few; the mercy and love of God was but for a few. But the mercy of God is over all, and upon all, and for all. All have right to hear the word of God; all have need to know the word of God. *All have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God.* (Rom. iii.)

Therefore Christ calleth all (Matt. xi.): *Come unto me all ye that be weary and laden*. Young men and old men, men and women, rich and poor, come to me. *God is no acceptor of persons.* (Acts x.) *It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven* (saith Christ Matt. xviii.) *that one of these little ones should perish. Who willet that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.* (1 Tim. ii.) *God will look to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his words.* (Isa. lxvi.) God will regard such a one, and make him a fit vessel to receive his truth. Upon him that is such a one shall the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of God rest.

Not only upon the rich, the wise, and the learned, but upon him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word; upon him that humbleth himself under the mighty hand of God; he is the temple and the tabernacle of the Holy Ghost. He that is humble in heart shall be saved: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly.

Therefore Christ said (Matt. xi.), *I give thee thanks, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto babes*, even to such as have no learning, which rejoice in nothing but in thee. The wise and learned of the world cannot hear them, cannot see them; but they to whom it pleased thee to give understanding. It

is thy mercy. Flesh and blood cannot reach the knowledge of thy will. The Spirit of the Father hath revealed it.

Christ saith (John x.), *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; they will not follow a stranger.* My people are simple as sheep; they are rude, and know not what they do; yet they know my voice, and follow me; they know their Shepherd from a thief; they follow not the call and voice of a stranger. So we see that God chaseth no man away from hearing his word; he loatheth not the poor, because of his poverty; he refuseth him not, for he is the God of the poor; they be his creatures.

St. Augustine saith, 'Almighty God, in the Scriptures, speaketh as a familiar friend, without dissimulation, unto the hearts both of the learned and of the unlearned.' He abaseth himself, and speaketh to their capacity; for his will is, that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved.

When Christ himself came first into the world to plant his church, he vouchsafed the poor and simple the knowledge of his truth, and showed it first unto them. The first that had tidings of his birth were not scribes and pharisees, but a company of poor shepherds. The first that received his gospel, and taught it in the world, were not doctors or learned men, but fishers, and toll-gatherers, and of base condition. The first that met him with triumph at Jerusalem, and sang Hosanna, were not bishops and priests, but babes and infants. They that followed him most and believed, were not the greatest men of power and policy, but such as the pharisees termed a cursed people, which knew not the law. The first that told the apostles the resurrection of Christ, were not the sagest and wisest men, but two or three silly women.

The first that were converted to the faith after his resurrection, were not any of the great, learned, or otherwise esteemed and known among the people, but about three thousand poor, silly, simple men; so base, and so out of knowledge, that not one of their names could ever be known.

Why should any man resist the wisdom of God, and deny the people the bread whereon they should feed, the light by which they may safely walk, the hearing and reading of the word, by which they

may be turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God? They have cruel hearts, and are enemies to the glory of God, and to the salvation of his people, which in such sort deny them the knowledge of the Scriptures. **BP. JEWELL.**

The Word of God provides for every want of Man.

ACCORDING unto the several estates, and unto the secret demands of each member's condition; so doth the care of Christ severally show itself towards the same in his word: there is provision for any want, medicine for any disease, comforts for any distress, promises for any faith, answers to any doubt, directions in any difficulty, weapons against any temptation, preservatives against any sin, restoratives against lapse, garments to cover my nakedness, meat to satisfy my hunger, physic to cure my diseases, armour to protect my person, a treasure to provide for my posterity. If I am rich, I have there the wisdom of God to instruct me; and if I am poor, I have there the obligations of God to enrich me. If I am honorable, I have there the sight of my sins to make me vile; and rules of moderation to make me humble: if I am of low degree, I have there the communion and consanguinity of Christ, the participation of the divine nature, the adoption of God the Father to make me noble. If I am learned, I have there a law of charity to order it unto edification; and if I am unlearned, I have there a Spirit which searcheth the deep things of God, which can give wisdom unto the simple, which can reveal secrets unto babes, which can command light to shine out of darkness, which can give the light of the knowledge of the glory, fullness, and love of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which can make me, though ignorant of all other things, to learn Christ, in whom there is more wisdom, more various and admirable curiosity, more filling and plentiful satisfaction, more proportion to the boundless desires of a soul once rectified, more fruit and salvation (which should be the end of every Christian man's learning) than in all other knowledge which either past or present ages can afford. In one word, every where, and in all things, I am there taught how to want, and how to abound, and how to do all things through Christ that strengthens me. A Christian can be set in no estate,

wherein the abundant care of Christ over him is not in the gospel wonderfully magnified.

BR. REYNOLDS.

Men never get beyond the New Testament.

For centuries past the world has been in a state of gradual improvement, which is still increasing with accelerated rapidity. Ancient ages, even the most renowned, we have far outstripped in every useful science; and by means of modern discoveries, their most famous books are found extremely deficient. Within the limits of the eighteenth century this has been remarkably the case. How many treatises regarded as master-pieces at the beginning were looked upon as antiquated before the end. When we consider the intense application of thousands of enlightened and highly cultivated minds, all in quest of new discoveries, and all endeavouring to improve on what was written before, we shall not wonder at this advancement.

It naturally occurs to inquire, how it is in reference to religion, and whether the New Testament stands its ground. A full proportion of learned men have applied themselves to the study of the principles of religion and morals, and to those sciences connected with them, which have respect to moral obligation and privilege. But have any of them outstripped the New Testament, as the moderns have outstripped the ancient philosophers? Have they found out any part of the character of God which it does not display, any duty which it does not inculcate? No: with all their researches, and with all the additional knowledge of eighteen centuries, they have not moved a step before the men of Galilee. Nay, they may perceive the New Testament is still before them.

In these latter times many conceive that considerable progress has been made in the knowledge of that part of morals which respects individual and domestic, but especially national relations. After having viewed these pretensions which profess to have their basis fixed on the principles of eternal justice, let us turn to the New Testament, and examine if these men have outstripped it. But we find there all these noble sentiments, the force and extent of which were not perceived before, that are applicable to what is good

in them, and to those things which are really improvements, and countenancing and enjoining them by the spirit of the gospel. Is it not astonishing that whenever any useful discovery in moral science has been made, it is found that the New Testament contains it, though before unnoticed? This has been the case from century to century: it is so still: and, beyond a doubt, there are still many divine principles of morals in the New Testament, which the progress in knowledge of this and future ages will lead men to discover.

But whence comes this peculiar quality in the New Testament? The vast comprehensive knowledge of the Spirit of God who indited it can alone be assigned as the rational and satisfactory cause. If Christianity had been the invention of men, it would have shared the fate of all other systems of the like origin. The improvements of modern times would have left it far behind.

This has been the case with all the Pagan religions. A person in the present age who had written on theological subjects, though of moderate abilities, instead of considering it as a compliment, would think himself grossly insulted if you were to say to him, 'I admire your book: your ideas of God and religion are fully on a level with the Grecian mythology, the Indian Shasters, and the system of Confucius.' Nor would he think that justice was done him, unless it was granted that he had surpassed the Koran of Mahomet in his representations of truth and duty. But the plain illiterate fishermen, publicans, and tent-makers of Judea and Galilee, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, are still masters in religion and morals. No man in all that time has stepped one foot before them. Let those who will not allow that they were taught of God, assign a satisfactory reason for their pre-eminence.

DR. BOGUE.

Exhortation to the reading of the Scriptures.

Who can take the light from us in this miserable vale of blindness, and mean not to have us stumble in the paths of perdition, to the ruin of our souls? Who will envy us this bread of life, prepared and set on the table for our eternal sustenance, and mean not to famish us, or instead thereof, with their corrupt traditions and

doctrines of man, to infect us? *All the whole Scriptures*, saith the holy Apostle St. Paul, inspired from God above, *is profitable to teach, to reprove, to reform, to instruct in righteousness, that the man of God may be sound and perfect, instructed in every good work.*

Search therefore, good reader (on God's name), as Christ biddeth thee, the holy Scripture, wherein thou mayest find thy salvation. Let not the volume of this book (by God's own warrant) depart from thee, but occupy thyself therein in the whole journey of this thy worldly pilgrimage, to understand thy way how to walk rightly before him all the days of thy life. Remember that the prophet David pronounceth him the blessed man, which will muse in the law of God both day and night. Remember that he calleth him blessed, which walketh in the way of the Lord, which will search diligently his testimonies, and will in his whole heart seek the same.

Let not the covert suspicious insinuations of the adversaries drive thee from the search of the holy Scriptures, either for the obscurity which they say is in them, or for the inscrutable hidden mysteries they talk to be comprised in them, or for the strangeness and homeliness of the phrases they would charge God's book with. Christ exhorteth thee therefore the rather for the difficulty of the same to search them diligently. St. Paul willeth thee to have thy senses exercised in them, and not to be a child in thy senses, but in malice.

Though many things may be difficult to thee to understand, impute it rather to thy dull hearing and reading, than to think that the Scriptures be insuperable to them which with diligeht searching labour to discern the evil from the good. Only search with an humble spirit, ask in continual prayer, seek with purity of life, knock with perpetual perseverance, and cry to that good Spirit of Christ the Comforter; and surely to every such asker it will be given, such searchers must needs find, to them it will be opened.

Christ himself will open the sense of the Scriptures, not to the proud, or to the wise of the world, but to the lowly and contrite in heart; for he hath the key of David, who openeth, and no man shutteth; who shutteth, and no man openeth. For as this Spirit is a benign and liberal Spirit, and will be easily found of them which will

early in carefulness rise to seek him, and as he promiseth he will be the Comforter from above to teach us, and to lead us into all the ways of truth, if that in humility we bow unto him, denying our own natural senses, our carnal wits and reasons; so he is the Spirit of purity and cleanness, and will recede from him whose conscience is subject to filthiness of life. Into such a soul this heavenly wisdom will not enter; for all perverse cogitations will separate us from God. And then how busily soever we search this holy table of the Scripture, yet will it then be a table to such to their own snare, a trap, a stumbling-block, and a recompense to themselves. . . .

And here, good reader, great cause we have to extol the wonderous wisdom of God, and with great thanks to praise his providence, considering how he hath preserved and renewed from age to age, by special miracle, the incomparable treasure of his church. 'For first he did inspire Moses,' as John Chrysostom doth testify, 'to write the stony tables, and kept him in the mountains forty days, to give him his law. After him he sent the prophets; but they suffered many thousand adversities; for battles did follow, all were slain, all were destroyed, books were burnt up. He then inspired another man to repair these miraculous Scriptures; Esdras, I mean, who of their leavings set them again together. After that, he provided that the seventy interpreters should take them in hand. At the last came Christ himself. The apostles did receive them, and spread them throughout all nations. Christ wrought his miracles and wonders; and what followed? After these great volumes, the apostles also did write, as St. Paul doth say, *These be written to the instruction of us, that be come into the end of the world.* And Christ doth say, *Ye therefore do err, because ye know not the Scripture, nor the power of God.* And Paul did say, *Let the word of Christ be plentiful among you.* And again saith David, *Oh! how sweet be thy words to my throat* (he saith not, to my hearing, but, to my throat), *above the honey or the honeycomb to my mouth!* Yea, Moses saith, *Thou shalt meditate in them evermore; when thou risest, and when thou sittest down, when thou goest to sleep, continue in them,* he saith, and a thousand places more. And yet after so many testimonies thus spoken, there be some persons that do not yet so

much as know what the Scriptures be; whereupon nothing is in good state amongst us, nothing worthily is done amongst us. In this which pertains to this life, we make very great haste, but of spiritual goods we have no regard.' Thus far John Chrysostom.

It must needs signify some great thing to our understanding, that Almighty God hath had such care to prescribe these books thus unto us; I say not prescribe them only, but to maintain them, and defend them against the malignity of the devil and his ministers, who always went about to destroy them. And yet would these never be so destroyed, but that he would have them continue whole and perfect unto this day, to our singular comfort and instruction, where other books of mortal wise men have perished in great numbers. . .

Whereupon, seeing Almighty God by his divine providence hath preserved these books of the Scriptures safe and sound, and that in their native languages they were first written in, the great ignorance that reigned in these tongues, and, contrary to all other casualties, chanced upon all other books, in maugre of all worldly wits, who would so fain have had them destroyed, and yet he by his mighty hand would have them extant as witnesses and interpreters of his will toward mankind; we may soon see cause most reverently to embrace these divine testimonies of his will, to study them, and to search them, to instruct our blind nature, so sore corrupted and fallen from the knowledge in which first we were created; yet having occasion given somewhat to recover our fall, and to return again to that divine nature wherein we were once made, and at the last to be inheritors in the celestial habitation with God Almighty, after the end of our mortality here, brought to his dust again.

These books, I say, being of such estimation and authority, so much revered of them who had any mean taste of them, could never be put out of the way neither by the spite of any tyrant, as that tyrant Maximian destroyed all the Holy Scriptures, wheresoever they could be found, and burnt them in the midst of the market; neither the hatred of any Porphyrian philosopher or rhetorician, neither by the envy of the Romanists, and of such hypocrites who from time to time did ever bark against them, some of them not in open sort of condemnation, but more cunningly

under subtle pretences; for that, as they were so hard to understand, and especially for that they affirm it to be a perilous matter to translate the text of the Holy Scripture, and therefore it cannot be well translated.

ABP. PARKER.

Christ to be chiefly sought for in Scripture.

SEARCH the Scriptures: if you think to have eternal life, search them: if you would know Christ, whom to know is eternal life, then again search them, for these are they that testify of him. Searching imports diligence, much diligence; it is a serious work; it is not a common seeking of an easy and common thing, but it is a search and scrutiny for some hidden thing, for some special thing. . . There is some hidden secret that you must search for, that is inclosed within the covering of words and sentences; there is a mystery of wisdom that you must apply your hearts to search out (Eccl. vii. 5). Jesus Christ is the treasure that is hid in this field,—a precious treasure of eternal life! Now then, search into the fields of the Scriptures (Prov. ii. 4), for him as for hid treasure. It is not only truth you must seek and buy, and not sell it, but it is life you must search for. Here is an object that may not only take up your understandings, but satisfy your hearts. Think not you have found all when you have found the truth there, and learned it. No, except you have found life there, you have found nothing, you have missed the treasure. If you would profit by the Scriptures, you must bring both your understandings and your affections to them, and depart not till they both return full: if you bring your understanding to seek the truth, you may find truth, but not truly. You may find it, but you are not found of it. You may lead truth captive, and inclose it in a prison of your mind, and encompass it about with a guard of corrupt affections, that it shall have no issue, no outgoing to the rest of your souls and ways, and no influence on them; you may know the truth, but you are not known of it, and brought in captivity to the obedience of it. The treasure that is hid in the Scriptures is Jesus Christ, whose entire and perfect name is, *Way, Truth, and Life*. He is a living truth and true life: therefore Christ is the adequate object of the soul, commensurable to all its faculties. He has truth in him to sa-

tisfy the mind, and has life and goodness in him to satiate the heart: therefore if thou wouldst find Jesus Christ, bring thy whole soul to seek him, as Paul expresseth it. He is true and faithful, and worthy of all acceptation; then bring thy judgment to find the light of truth, and thy affections to embrace the life of goodness that is in him.

Now, as much as ye find of him, so much have ye profited in the Scriptures. If you find commands there which you cannot obey, search again, and you may find strength under that command; dig a little deeper, and you shall find Jesus the end of an impossible command: and when you have found him, you have found life and strength to obey, and you have found a propitiation and sacrifice for transgressing and not obeying. If you find curses in it, search again, and you shall find Jesus Christ, under that, made a curse for us; you shall find him, in the end of the curse, for righteousness to every one that believes.

REV. H. BINNING.

What more glorious truth can possibly remain concealed in the Scriptures, now that the seals have been broken, and the stone is rolled from the door of the sepulchre, and this transcendent mystery has gone forth,—Christ the Son of God became a man, God is Three in One, Christ hath suffered for us, and will reign for us for ever and ever? Verily these things are universally known and spread abroad. But take Christ from the Scriptures, and what will you find in them more?

LUTHER.*

Scripture must be applied by the Holy Spirit.

ALL the books and writings which we converse with, they can but represent spiritual objects to our understandings; which yet we can never see in their own true figure, colour, and proportion, until we have a divine light within, to irradiate and shine upon them. . . . Though there be never such excellent truths concerning Christ and his Gospel set down in words and letters; yet they will be but unknown characters to us, until we have a living Spirit within us that can decipher them, until the same Spirit, by secret whispers in our hearts, do comment upon them, which did at first indite them.

* Ex Tom. iii. Lat. 169. b.

There be many that understand the Greek and Hebrew of the Scripture, the original languages in which the text was written, that never understood the language of the Spirit.

There is a flesh and a spirit, a body and a soul, in all the writings of the Scriptures. It is but the flesh and body of divine truths that is printed upon paper;—which many moths of books and libraries do only feed upon;—which many walking skeletons of knowledge, that bury and entomb truths in the living sepulchres of their souls, do only converse with; such as never did any thing else but pick at the mere bark and rind of truths, and crack the shells of them. But there is a soul and spirit of divine truths that could never yet be congealed into ink, that could never be blotted upon paper, which by a secret traduction and conveyance passeth from one soul unto another, being able to dwell or lodge no where but in a spiritual being, in a living thing, because itself is nothing but life and spirit. Neither can it, where indeed it is, express itself sufficiently in words and sounds, but it will best declare and speak itself in actions; as the old manner of writing among the Egyptians was, not by words, but things. The life of divine truths is better expressed in actions than in words, because actions are more living things than words: words are nothing but dead resemblances and pictures of those truths which live and breathe in actions: and the kingdom of God, as the Apostle speaketh, consisteth not in word, but in life and power. . .

Let us not, I beseech you, judge of our knowing Christ by our ungrounded persuasions that Christ from all eternity hath loved us, and given himself particularly for us, without the conformity of our lives to Christ's commandments, without the real partaking of the image of Christ in our hearts. The great mystery of the Gospel doth not lie only in Christ without us, though we must know also what he hath done for us; but the very pith and kernel of it consists in Christ inwardly formed in our hearts.

Nothing is truly ours but what lives in our spirits. Salvation itself cannot save us as long as it is only without us; no more than health can cure us, and make us sound, when it is not within us, but somewhere at a distance from us; no more than arts and sciences, whilst they lie only

in books and papers without us, can make us learned. The Gospel, though it be a sovereign and medicinal thing in itself, yet the mere knowing and believing of the history of it will do us no good : we can receive no virtue from it till it be inwardly digested and concocted into our souls ; till it be made ours, and become a living thing in our hearts. The Gospel, if it be only without us, cannot save us ; no more than that physician's bill could cure the ignorant patient of his disease, who, when it was commended to him, took the paper only, and put it up in his pocket, but never drank the potion that was prescribed in it.

All that Christ did for us in the flesh, when he was here upon earth, from his lying in a manger when he was born in Bethlehem, to his bleeding upon the cross on Golgotha, it will not save us from our sins, unless Christ by his Spirit dwell in us. It will not avail us to believe that he was born of a Virgin, unless the power of the Most High overshadow our hearts, and beget him there likewise. It will not profit us to believe that he died upon the cross for us, unless we be baptised into his death by the mortification of all our lusts ; unless the old man of sin be crucified in our hearts. Christ indeed hath made an expiation for our sins upon his cross, and the blood of Christ is the only sovereign balsam to free us from the guilt of them : but yet, besides the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon us, we must be made partakers also of his Spirit. Christ came into the world, as well to redeem us from the power and bondage of our sins, as to free us from the guilt of them. *You know*, saith St. John, *that he was manifested to take away our sins : whosoever therefore abideth in him, sinneth not ; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen nor known him.* Lo, the end of Christ's coming into the world ! lo, a design worthy of God manifested in the flesh ! CUDWORTH.

For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. That you have yielded obedience unto the word, and that my ministry hath been effectual among you, it cometh not of any power in yourselves or in me, it is the work of God. He hath blessed my ministry ; he hath blessed your hearts. It is the gift of God, lest any man should boast thereof. Hereof he speaketh to the

Corinthians : *Who is Paul then, and who is Apollos, but the ministers by whom ye believed, and as the Lord gave to every man ? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6. It is he which hath the key of David, which openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth.* Without him we can do nothing ; he guideth us and all our counsels, and leadeth us into all truth. *No man can come unto me* (saith Christ, John vi.) *except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.* And by the prophet Ezekiel God saith, *I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you ; I will put my spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them, Ezekiel xxxvi.* And by the prophet Jeremiah : *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* Therefore David maketh his prayer, *Teach me, O Lord ; give me understanding, and I will keep thy laws, Psal. cxix.*

The words of the preacher enter in at the ear : the Spirit of God conveyeth them into the heart. Augustine saith, 'The Gospel is declared : some there are which believe ; some there are which believe not ; they which believe, hear it inwardly by the Father, and so learn it ; they which believe not, hear it only with their outward sense, and not with inward feeling, and therefore learn it not.' As much as to say, to them it is given to believe ; to the other it is not given. In the Acts of the Apostles (xvi.), *Lydia, a woman of the city of the Thyatireans, heard the preaching of the Apostle Paul ;* (but it is said) *whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that Paul spake.* The people which said unto Peter, and the other Apostles, *Men and brethren, what shall we do ?* did hear all the words of Peter ; but they had another teacher, that gave force unto the word, and made it fruitful in them, and therefore it is said, *They were pricked in their hearts.*

This also appeared in the disciples which walked towards Emmaus (Luke xxiv.) ; they heard Christ open the Scriptures unto them ; they reasoned with him ; yet until their eyes were opened, they knew him not. His word crept into their ears, but it was the Spirit of God which wrought within them, which inflamed

their hearts, and made them to know him. Thus God blesseth his word, and maketh it yield fruit in such measure as his wisdom hath appointed. His blessing appeareth greater when many are converted, yet is his word all one, and the power thereof no whit shorter when it is utterly refused, or received but of few. *Surely (saith God), as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it fruitful, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to him that eateth; so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I will, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.* (Isaiah lv.) It is the word of the living God which is blessed for ever; and blessed is that heart which can receive it, which God instructeth, and giveth knowledge of his word; which doth so learn it that he is assured of the truth thereof, and nothing doubteth but it is indeed the word of life; which saith thereof, this is the way, in which if I walk I shall certainly go forward to the city of my God: this is the truth; if I hearken unto it, I shall never be deceived. Whosoever findeth himself endowed with this grace, he doth as plainly and evidently judge of the words of God, and try out the truth thereof from the devices and doctrines of men, as a man of clear eyesight is able to judge of colours, and to know one colour from another. Yea, in this is the knowledge of that more certain, because colours do fade and alter, and many times one colour thereby waxeth like another: but the truth of God doth never alter; it continueth one through all ages; it is the word of everlasting life: heaven and earth shall perish, but one tittle thereof shall not be lost: the truth of God shall be established for ever; the humble shall hear it, and be glad.

BR. JEWELL.

Until God himself touch our hearts by his Spirit, it is impossible that we should believe his word. For such is the corruption of our understanding, that the word of the cross is foolishness to us. The unregenerate man employs his understanding on such things only as fall under his senses, or as are confirmed to him by evident and necessary demonstrations. How then should the natural man

believe the gospel, which is not merely repugnant to the carnal mind, but which will not even submit to the trial of human reason? And in reality, how can a man, puffed up with human wisdom, do otherwise than call this faith foolishness, which some poor ignorant fishermen and other illiterate characters would obtrude on the whole world, and persuade them, that God infinitely happy in himself, should condescend so far as to take on him the form of a servant, to become a man of sorrows, nay, even to suffer the ignominious death of the cross?

It were folly indeed to attempt to subject the gospel to man's reason, since it far surpasseth his understanding. We seek not reasoning, but we submit our reason to the Scriptures. Our faith doth not rest on human arguments, but is grounded on the word of God. We are not saved by demonstrations, but by believing the gospel. Science is an habit acquired by demonstrations; but faith is the gift of God, which believeth things that our reason is not capable of demonstrating. The human understanding may comprehend science, but faith is infinitely superior to it. Could our understanding of itself have comprehended the gospel, the gospel had been unworthy the majesty of him, whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways are past finding out. In short, the less our understanding comprehendeth the mysteries of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of the Son of God, the more doth our faith perceive that the power and wisdom of God are infinite.

S. DURAND.

I can by no means bear to hear that philosophy is the interpreter of Holy Writ. For it would then be no longer the portion of believers, of spiritual men, of babes, to understand the Scriptures, but of the wise and prudent (Matt. xi. 25), which is diametrically opposite to the dispensation of the New Testament; since God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth; and not a few wise and superior geniuses only. He will pour of his Spirit upon all flesh, that all may know him. As the Scriptures are so clear, in the articles necessary for our salvation, what necessity have we of philosophers to explain them? Jesus Christ and his apostles sought for a demonstration of their gospel not in

ay, but in the prophets. Who hath ever dared to make the Holy Ghost, that great Teacher of all the truth, dependent on philosophy? *We have received not the spirit of the world* (1 Cor. ii. 12), which indeed is the spirit of philosophers, *but the Spirit which is of God.*
J. H. HEIDIGER.

Marks by which to ascertain whether we are partakers of Light and Grace in reading the Scriptures.

THOUGH the degrees of light and grace communicated by the Holy Spirit to different persons are various, for he divides *to every man severally as he will* (1 Cor. xii. 11), yet some general marks may be pointed out by which we may ascertain whether we are in any measure partakers of it. The believer feels his influence in turning him from sin to God, and exciting him earnestly to seek the salvation of his soul; as the one great object of his life. The Holy Spirit produces in him humility of mind, and a willingness to receive instruction. He manifests to him the wisdom of God in the great doctrines of the Bible, *being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood*, and the necessity of *a new heart and a new spirit*. He leads him earnestly to desire to see the character and glory of God, to enjoy his presence, and to be conformed to his likeness. He inclines the heart to love holiness, because God is holy; and heaven, because it is a holy place; and he gives an efficacy to the word, making it powerful to excite and promote every holy temper and disposition. He enables him to say, *thy testimonies are my delight*; and through his influence, the believer often finds the Bible to be a source of the greatest comfort, filling him *with joy unspeakable*, and a hope *full of glory*. Reader! ask your own conscience, Have I experienced any of these things? Has the Bible been thus brought home to my heart? How can it be so if you have never diligently and perseveringly sought the influence of this blessed Guide and Comforter? REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

On the Difficulties of Revealed Religion.

SOME difficulties occur in the Christian revelation, which human reason can hardly

clear; but as the truth of it stands upon evidence so strong and convincing, that it cannot be denied without much greater difficulties than those that attend the belief of it, we ought not to reject it upon such objections, however mortifying they may be to our pride. That, indeed, would have all things made plain to us; but God has thought proper to proportion our knowledge to our wants, not our pride. All that concerns our duty is clear; and as to other points, either of natural or revealed religion, if he has left some obscurities in them, is that any reasonable cause of complaint? Not to rejoice in the benefit of what he has graciously allowed us to know, from a presumptuous disgust at our incapacity for knowing more, is as absurd as it would be to refuse to walk, because we cannot fly.

From the arrogant ignorance of metaphysical reasonings, aiming at matters above our knowledge, arose all the speculative impiety, and many of the worst superstitions of the old heathen world, before the gospel was preached, to bring men back again from the primitive faith; and from the same source have since flowed some of the greatest corruptions of the evangelical truth, and the most inveterate prejudice against it: an effect just as natural as for our eyes to grow weak, and even blind, by being strained to look at objects too distant, or not made for them to see.

Are, then, our intellectual faculties of no use in religion? yes, undoubtedly, of the most necessary use, when rightly employed. The proper employment of them is to distinguish its genuine doctrines from others erroneously or corruptly ascribed to it; to consider the importance and purport of them, with the connection they bear to one another; but first of all to examine with the strictest attention the evidence by which religion is proved, internal as well as external. If the external evidence be convincingly strong, and there is no internal proof of its falsehood, but much to support and confirm its truth, then surely no difficulties ought to prevent our giving a full assent and belief to it. It is our duty, indeed, to endeavour to find the best solutions we can to them; but where no satisfactory ones are to be found, it is no less our duty to acquiesce with humility, and believe that to be right which we know is above us, and belonging to a wisdom superior to ours.

Nor let it be said, that this will be an argument for the admitting all doctrines, however absurd, that may have been grafted upon the Christian faith: those which can plainly be proved not to belong to it fall not under the reasoning I have laid down (and certainly none do belong to it which contradict either our clear, intuitive knowledge, or the evident principles and dictates of reason). I speak only of difficulties which attend the belief of the gospel in some of its pure and essential doctrines, plainly and evidently delivered there, which being made known to us by a revelation supported by proofs, that our reason ought to admit, and not being such things as it can certainly know to be false, must be received by it as objects of faith, though they are such as it could not have discovered by any natural means, and such as are difficult to be conceived, or satisfactorily explained by its limited powers. If the glorious light of the gospel be sometimes overcast with clouds of doubt, so is the light of our reason too. But shall we deprive ourselves of the advantage of either, because those clouds cannot perhaps be entirely removed while we remain in this mortal life? Shall we obstinately and forwardly shut our eyes against *that day-spring from on high that has visited us*, because we are not as yet able to bear the full blaze of his beams? Indeed, not even in heaven itself, not in the highest state of perfection to which a finite being can ever attain, will all the counsels of Providence, all the height and the depth of the infinite wisdom of God, be ever disclosed or understood. Faith even then will be necessary, and there will be mysteries which cannot be penetrated by the most exalted archangel, and truths which cannot be known by him otherwise than from revelation, or believed upon any other ground of assent, than a submissive confidence in the divine wisdom. What, then, shall man presume that his weak and narrow understanding is sufficient to guide him into all truth, without any need of revelation or faith? Shall he complain that the ways of God are not like his ways, and past his finding out? True philosophy, as well as true Christianity, would teach us a wiser and modester part: it would teach us to be content within those bounds which God has assigned to us, *casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and*

bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. LITTLETON.

The insufficiency of Natural Religion, and the necessity of the Christian Revelation.

DEISM, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed religion in the posterity of Noah; and our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophising divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained that by their force mankind has been able to find out that there is one supreme agent or intellectual being which we call God; that praise and prayer are his due worship; and the rest of those deductions, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God by the weak pinions of our reason, but he has been pleased to descend to us; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato wrote, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of motion, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is, by its own virtue. And indeed it is very improbable that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any being, not so much as of our own, should be able to find out by them that Supreme Nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They who would prove religion by reason do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support. It is to take away the pillars from our faith, and prop it only with a twig; it is to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible, as it is not, to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the workmen. For every man is building a several way; impotently conceited of his own model, and of his own materials. Reason is always striving, always at a loss; and of necessity it must so come to pass, while it is exercised about that which is not its proper object. Let us be content at last to know God by his own me-

thods; at least so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the sacred Scriptures. To apprehend them to be the word of God is all our reason has to do; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of Heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

DRYDEN.

They that are whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick. Had man continued in innocence, the religion of nature would have answered all the ends of his creation: he wanted no Redeemer in his natural state; for it would be absurd to suppose that Christ came to redeem man from the state and condition in which God made him. After the works of creation were finished, God liked them all, and *saw every thing that he had made; and behold it was very good*: in this state therefore nothing was wanting to the perfection of the creature: God was pleased with all his works, and with man especially, to whom he gave dominion over the rest of the world. In this state therefore there was no want of a reconciler between God and man; nor would there ever have been any such want had this happy state continued.

That innocence and virtue shall be rewarded, guilt and iniquity punished, is no more than what natural sense and reason have always taught the considering part of mankind: for the voice of reason and of the law are in this respect the same; *This do, and thou shalt live*. And though man is altered and changed, yet the nature of things is still the same; and he is no ill reasoner, who, from the abstracted consideration of virtue and vice, concludes, that virtue has a just title to reward, and vice deserves punishment: and it is no wonder that they who argue upon these general views only should imagine that moral virtue may still exalt a man to all the degrees of happiness that his nature is capable of.

In the celebrated question concerning the merit of good works, there has arose much confusion, for want of distinguishing between good works, simply and in their own nature considered, and considered as done or performed by the sons of men. The first is a single question; Whether virtue in its own nature has a title to reward? And who will deny it? For as sure as God is just, as sure as there is a

difference between good and evil, he will, he must reward the one, and punish the other. But when you ask, Whether the good works of men deserve and merit reward? you strangely alter the state of the question; for here not only the nature of good works, but the nature and condition of man must be considered too. If he has already concluded himself, if sentence is gone out against him, and his case be irretrievable, your question must be impertinent; because you ask, Whether he, who is already under condemnation for his evil works, may be rewarded for his good works?

Put the case, that a man ten years ago committed a secret and barbarous murder; that since he has lived in an unblameable submission and obedience to the government: ask then the question, Whether obedience and submission to the government have a right and title to protection and defence in life and fortune? Every man will answer, Yes. But ask again, Whether this man's obedience and submission have the same right and title? Every man will answer, No: because the villany committed long since puts him out of protection of the government, and justice is still indebted to him for the horrid fact; and whenever it meets him will execute upon him wrath and vengeance.

I intend not to press this instance to a parallel with our case: but thus much, at least, it shows, that virtue and morality may, in their own nature, and in themselves considered, deserve reward from a just and righteous Being; and yet the virtue and morality of man may not deserve it. And this is the parting point between the patrons of natural and revealed religion; the not considering which has made some imagine that, whilst we defend the authority of revelation, we give up the principles of reason and nature. Is there not, say they, an essential difference between virtue and vice? True, there is. Is not justice the attribute of God? and must not a just God reward virtue, and punish vice? True still. Is not this then, say they, a sufficient foundation for religion, without recurring to grace and faith, or miracles, or mysteries? True, it is, where native innocence is preserved, where religion is *res integra*: but what will you say of those who have already offended? Consult your principles of reason; the voice of nature is, that vice must

be punished: if so, all that offenders, all that sinners can expect from natural religion is the just reward of their sins and offences: and whether these are such terms and conditions as should endear natural religion to sinners, common sense shall judge. . . .

Some, I know, contend, that it may be proved, from the mercies and goodness of God, that he will forgive sinners. If so, there can be no such thing as natural religion: for it is demonstrable, from the justice of God, that he must reward virtue, and punish vice; and, if it be demonstrable too from his mercy that he must forgive sin, then natural religion includes the greatest contradiction in nature, that sin necessarily must, and necessarily must not be punished. If you say only, that it is probable that a merciful God will pity the folly and weakness of humankind, and recede from the strictness of justice in his dealings with them, so say we too; but probability cannot infer necessity; and, if it be not necessary that he should do it, it must then depend upon his will, whether he will do it or no; and your hopes and your religion must be resolved, not into the evidence of nature, but into the evidence of free grace; which evidence can be no other than revelation; for the Spirit only searcheth the deep things of God, and the Spirit only can bring them to light.

Would you then disprove revelation, and discard the religion of Christ? For once you must prove mankind to be in a state of innocence and purity, and then it will be senseless to talk of redemption; for what should innocence be redeemed from? You must show that nature is not vitiated or corrupted, that the flesh does not just against the mind; but that there is a mutual agreement, and the flesh obeys the mind, and the mind obeys God: then you may at once reject the doctrine of repentance, of free grace, of justification through the blood of Christ. . . .

Innocence may challenge justice; but sin can only sue for pardon. Justice you may have from nature; but pardon you must have from grace and favor. It was an apophthegm of one of the wise men, *Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, 'Learn to know yourself:' and this is the first thing necessary in order to choose your religion, rightly to know and understand your own condition. A condemned malefactor must not sue to

his prince in the same terms that a faithful and deserving subject may: the one may represent his service and obedience; the other has nothing to plead but his misery: one applies to the justice and generosity of the prince; the other to his pity and compassion. Consider then with yourself; can you stand a trial with God? Can you plead your services to him, and say, Behold thy servant; do unto him according to his works? If you can, justice will do you right: but if your heart misgives you; if your conscience cries out to you, Let us not enter into judgment with our God, for in his sight shall no man living be justified; what have you to do but to seek, if happily you may find, the mercy of God? . . . The fact then supposed, which cannot be contested, that mankind was in a state of corruption and degeneracy, it is manifest that they were fallen under the displeasure of God, or, in the language of Scripture, were become *children of wrath*. To redeem the world, therefore, it was necessary that God should be reconciled to sinners, and should pardon the offences which could not be recalled, or which, through infirmity of nature, could not be avoided. To think of a redemption on any other foot would be absolutely absurd; it would be an attempt to rescue sinners from the displeasure and anger of God, whether he would or no.

Look now into the gospel, and see how this case stands there. You will find that the only-begotten Son of God took our nature on him; and that by a perfect obedience to the voice of his Father, and a voluntary resignation of himself to the cross, he made and completed this reconciliation, and proclaimed the pardon of God to the lost sons of Adam. And in this properly consists the work of redemption.

But to redeem men from the displeasure of God, and leave them in a condition to draw it on themselves afresh every day, would have been a useless undertaking, and unworthy of his dignity who was employed in it. To secure therefore the benefit of the redemption which he had purchased with his blood to mankind, it was necessary to restore them to such a state as might render them fit objects for God to take pleasure in. This too he did by the powerful methods prescribed in the gospel for rectifying the corrupt and depraved wills of men, by the many revela-

tions relating to his own spiritual kingdom, given to clear and enlighten their understanding in the things belonging to their salvation; the knowledge of which had been lost, or so darkened and obscured by the fall, as to be of no efficacy in reforming the world. And to render these means effectual to the purposes of salvation, he promised and bestowed the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enable men to receive and to lay hold of eternal life.

This is a short account of what Christ has done to save sinners. He has reconciled God to you; have you any reason to be offended? He has procured your pardon: has he injured you by so doing? If not, what is it any man has to complain of? . . .

The advantages procured for us, and the discoveries made to us by the gospel of Christ, do so correspond to the sentiments of nature within us, that it is wonderful to find the pretensions of nature set in opposition to the Christian revelation. The moral duties of the gospel are but the dictates of reason and nature carried into their just conclusions: the promises of the gospel contain the very hopes of nature confirmed and made sure to us. If the gospel has promised pardon to sinners, it is but what Nature teaches all her children to seek for: and if Nature teaches you to hope for mercy, is your case become the worse because God, through Christ, has promised it? Natural conscience tells us we are accountable to him who made us: is it not the same declaration made in the gospel, *That God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world?* Is not Nature ever looking out, and with unutterable groans panting after life for evermore? Has she any reason then to fly from him who hath *brought life and immortality to light through the gospel?*

Go then and learn of Nature to value these great gifts: attend to her silent voice within you: it will speak in the language of the apostle, and tell you, *This saying is worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

BR. SHERLOCK.

The general Argument for the Truth of Christianity.

I SHALL now endeavour to give some account of the general argument for the

truth of Christianity, consisting both of the direct and circumstantial evidence, considered as making up one argument. . .

This revelation, whether real or supposed, may be considered as wholly historical. For prophecy is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass: doctrines also are matters of fact: and precepts come under the same notion. And the general design of Scripture, which contains in it this revelation, thus considered as historical, may be said to be, to give us an account of the world, in this one single view, as God's world; by which it appears essentially distinguished from all other books, so far as I have found, except such as are copied from it. It begins with an account of God's creation of the world, in order to ascertain and distinguish from all others, who is the object of our worship, by what he has done; in order to ascertain who he is, concerning whose providence, commands, promises, and threatenings, this sacred book all along treats; the Maker and Proprietor of the world, he whose creatures we are, the God of nature: in order likewise to distinguish him from the idols of the nations, which are either imaginary beings, i. e. no beings at all; or else part of that creation, the historical relation of which is here given. And St. John, not improbably with an eye to this Mosaic account of the creation, begins his gospel with an account of our Saviour's pre-existence, and that *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made* (John i. 3); agreeably to the doctrine of St. Paul, that *God created all things by Jesus Christ* (Eph. iii. 9). This being premised, the Scripture, taken together, seems to profess to contain a kind of an abridgment of the history of the world, in the view just now mentioned; that is, a general account of the condition of religion and its professors, during the continuance of that apostasy from God, and state of wickedness, which it every where supposes the world to lie in. And this account of the state of religion carries with it some brief account of the political state of things, as religion is affected by it. Revelation, indeed, considers the common affairs of this world, and what is going on in it, as a mere scene of distraction, and cannot be supposed to concern itself with foretelling, at what

time Rome, or Babylon, or Greece, or any particular place, should be the most conspicuous seat of that tyranny and dissoluteness, which all places equally aspire to be; cannot, I say, be supposed to give any account of this wild scene for its own sake. But it seems to contain some very general account of the chief governments of the world, as the general state of religion has been, is, or should be, affected by them, from the first transgression, and during the whole interval of the world's continuing in its present state, to a certain future period, spoken of both in the Old and New Testament, very distinctly, and in great variety of expression; *The times of the restitution of all things* (Acts iii. 21); when *the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets* (Rev. x. 7); when *the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people* (Dan. ii.), as it is represented to be during this apostasy, but *judgment shall be given to the saints* (Dan. vii. 22), and *they shall reign* (Rev. i. 6); and *the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.* (Dan. vii.) . . .

Together with the moral system of the world, the Old Testament contains a chronological account of the beginning of it, and from thence, an unbroken genealogy of mankind for many ages before common history begins; and carried on as much farther, as to make up a continued thread of history, of the length of between three and four thousand years. It contains an account of God's making a covenant with a particular nation, that they should be his people, and he would be their God, in a peculiar sense; of his often interposing miraculously in their affairs; giving them the promise, and, long after, the possession of a particular country; assuring them of the greatest national prosperity in it, if they would worship him, in opposition to the idols which the rest of the world worshipped, and obey his commands, and threatening them with unexampled punishments, if they disobeyed him, and fell into the general idolatry; insomuch, that this one nation should continue to be the observation and the wonder of all the world. It declares particularly, that *God*

would scatter them among all people, from one end of the earth unto the other; but that when they should return unto the Lord their God, he would have compassion upon them, and gather them from all the nations whither he had scattered them; that Israel should be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation, and not be ashamed or confounded, world without end. And as some of these promises are conditional, others are as absolute as any thing can be expressed, that the time should come, when *the people should be all righteous, and inherit the land for ever: that though God would make a full end of all nations whither he had scattered them, yet would he not make a full end of them: that he would bring again the captivity of his people Israel, and plant them upon their land, and they should be no more pulled up out of their land: that the seed of Israel should not cease from being a nation for ever.* (Deut. xxviii. 64. Ch. xxx. 2, 3. Isa. xlv. 17. Ch. lx. 21. Jer. xxx. 11. Ch. xlvii. 28. Amos ix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 36.) It foretells, that God would raise them up a particular person, in whom all his promises should finally be fulfilled; the Messiah, who should be, in a high and eminent sense, their anointed Prince and Saviour. This was foretold in such a manner, as raised a general expectation of such a person in the nation, as appears from the New Testament, and is an acknowledged fact; an expectation of his coming at such a particular time, before any one appeared, claiming to be that person, and when there was no ground for such an expectation but from the prophecies; which expectation, therefore, must in all reason be presumed to be explanatory of those prophecies, if there were any doubt about their meaning. It seems moreover to foretell, that this person should be rejected by that nation, to whom he had been so long promised, and though he was so much desired by them. (Isa. viii. 14, 15. Ch. xlix. 5. Ch. liii. Mal. i. 10, 11, and Ch. iii.) And it expressly foretells, that he should be the Saviour of the Gentiles; and even that the completion of the scheme, contained in his book, and then begun, and in its progress should be somewhat so great, that, in comparison with it, the restoration of the Jews alone would be but of small account. *It is a light thing that thou*

*shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the pre-served of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation unto the end of the earth. And, in the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish.** The Scripture farther contains an account, that at the time the Messiah was expected, a person rose up, in this nation, claiming to be that Messiah, to be the person whom all the prophecies referred to, and in whom they should centre; that he spent some years in a continued course of miraculous works, and endured his immediate disciples and followers with a power of doing the same, as a proof of the truth of that religion which he commissioned them to publish; that, invested with this authority and power, they made numerous converts in the remotest countries, and settled and established his religion in the world; to the end of which, the Scripture professes to give a prophetic account of the state of this religion amongst mankind. . . .

Suppose now a person quite ignorant of history, first to recollect the passages above mentioned out of Scripture, without knowing but what the whole was a late fiction, then to be informed of the following facts, and to unite them all into one view: that the profession and establishment of natural religion in the world is greatly owing, in different ways, to this book, and the supposed revelation which it contains; that it is acknowledged to be of the earliest antiquity; that its chronology and common history are entirely credible; that this ancient nation, the Jews, of whom it chiefly treats, appear to have been, in fact, the people of God, in a distinguished sense; that, as there was a national expectation amongst them, raised from the prophecies, of a Messiah to appear at such a time, so one at this time

appeared claiming to be that Messiah; that he was rejected by this nation, but received by the Gentiles, not upon the evidence of prophecy, but of miracles; that the religion he taught supported itself under the greatest difficulties, gained ground, and at length became the religion of the world; that in the mean time the Jewish polity was utterly destroyed, and the nation dispersed over the face of the earth; that, notwithstanding this, they have remained a distinct numerous people for so many centuries, even to this day; which not only appears to be the express completion of several prophecies concerning them, but also renders it, as one may speak, a visible and easy possibility, that the promises made to them as a nation, may yet be fulfilled. And to these acknowledged truths, let the person we have been supposing add, as I think he ought, whether every one will allow it or no, the obvious appearances which there are of the state of the world, in other respects besides what relates to the Jews, and of the Christian church, having so long answered, and still answering to the prophetic history. Suppose, I say, these facts set over against the things before mentioned out of the Scripture, and seriously compared with them; the joint view of both together must, I think, appear of very great weight to a considerate reasonable person; of much greater, indeed, upon having them first laid before him, than is easy for us, who are so familiarised to them, to conceive, without some particular attention for that purpose.

All these things, and the several particulars contained under them, require to be distinctly and most thoroughly examined into; that the weight of each may be judged of, upon such examination, and such conclusion drawn as results from their united force. But this has not been attempted here. I have gone no farther than to show, that the general imperfect view of them now given, the confessed historical evidence for miracles, and the many obvious appearing completions of prophecy, together with the collateral things here mentioned, and there are several others of the like sort; that all this together, which, being fact, must be acknowledged by unbelievers, amounts to real evidence of somewhat more than human in this matter; evidence much more important than careless men, who

* Isa. xlix. 6. Ch. ii. Ch. xi. Ch. lvi. 7. Mal. i. 11. To which must be added, the other prophecies of the like kind, several in the New Testament, and very many in the Old, which describe what shall be the completion of the revealed plan of Providence.

have been accustomed only to transient and partial views of it, can imagine, and indeed abundantly sufficient to act upon. And these things, I apprehend, must be acknowledged by unbelievers. For though they may say, that the historical evidence of miracles, wrought in attestation of Christianity, is not sufficient to convince them that such miracles were really wrought, they cannot deny that there is such historical evidence, it being a known matter of fact that there is. They may say, the conformity between the prophecies and events is by accident; but there are many instances in which such conformity itself cannot be denied. They may say, with regard to such kind of collateral things as those above mentioned, that any odd accidental events, without meaning, will have a meaning found in them by fanciful people; and that such as are fanciful in any one certain way, will make out a thousand coincidences, which seem to favor their peculiar follies. Men, I say, may talk thus; but no one who is serious can possibly think these things to be nothing, if he considers the importance of collateral things, and even of lesser circumstances, in the evidence of probability, as distinguished, in nature, from the evidence of demonstration. In many cases, indeed, it seems to require the truest judgment to determine with exactness the weight of circumstantial evidence; but it is very often altogether as convincing, as that which is the most express and direct.

This general view of the evidence for Christianity, considered as making one argument, may also serve to recommend to serious persons, to set down every thing, which they think may be of any real weight at all in proof of it, and particularly the many seeming completions of prophecy; and they will find, that, judging by the natural rules by which we judge of probable evidence in common matters, they amount to a much higher degree of proof, upon such a joint review, than could be supposed upon considering them separately, at different times, how strong soever the proof might before appear to them, upon such separate views of it. For probable proofs, by being added, not only increase the evidence, but multiply it. **BP. BUTLER.**

The inward Witness to Christianity.

THE learned well know what need there is of turning over the histories of ancient

times, of the traditions and writings of the fathers, and all authors pious and profane; what need of critical skill in the holy languages and in ancient manuscripts; what a wide survey of various circumstances of fact, time, place, style, diction, is necessary to confirm one or another book or verse of the New Testament, and to answer the doubts of the scrupulous, and the bold objections of the infidel. Now how few of the common rank of Christians, whose hearts are inlaid with true faith in the Son of God, and with real holiness, have leisure, books, instruction, advantages, and judgment sufficient to make a thorough search into these matters, and to determine, upon a just view of argument, that these books were written by the sacred authors whose names they bear, and that these authors were under an immediate inspiration in writing them. What a glorious advantage is it then to have such an infallible testimony to the truth of the gospel wrought and written in the heart by renewing grace, as does not depend on this laborious, learned, and argumentative evidence of the divine authority of the Bible, or of any particular book or verse in it!

Secondly, if we consider what bold assaults are sometimes made upon the faith of the unlearned Christian by the deists and unbelievers of our age, by disputing against the authority of the Scripture, by ridiculing the strange narratives and sublime doctrines of the Bible, by setting the seeming contradictions in a blasphemous light, and then demanding, 'How can you prize, or how can you believe that this book is the word of God, or that the religion it teaches is divine?' In such an hour of contest, how happy is the Christian that can say, 'Though I am not able to solve all the difficulties in the Bible, nor maintain the sacred authority of it against the cavils of wit and learning, yet I am well assured that the doctrines of this book are sacred, and the authority of them divine; for when I heard and received them, they changed my nature; they subdued my sinful appetites; they made a new creature of me, and raised me from death to life; they made me love God above all things, and gave me the lively and well grounded hope of his love. Therefore I cannot doubt but that the chief principles of this book are divine, though I cannot so well prove that the very words and syllables

of it are so too; for it is the sense of Scripture, and not the mere letters of it, on which I build my hope. Though I cannot recollect all the arguments that prove Matthew, Mark and Luke to be divine historians, or Peter and Paul to be inspired writers; yet the substance and chief sense of these gospels and their epistles must needs be divine; for it has begun the spiritual and eternal life in my soul; and this is my witness, or rather the witness of the Spirit of God within us, that Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, and the religion that I profess and practise is safe and divine.'

And though there are many and sufficient arguments drawn from criticism, history, and human learning to prove the sacred authority of the Bible, and such as may give abundant satisfaction to an honest inquirer, and full satisfaction that it is the word of God; yet this is the chief evidence that the greatest part of Christians can ever attain of the divine original of the Holy Scripture itself, as well as the truth of the doctrines contained in it; namely, that they have found a holy and heavenly change passed upon them, by reading and hearing the propositions, the histories, the precepts, the promises, and the threatenings of this book; and thence they are wont to infer, that the God of truth would not attend a book, which was not agreeable to his mind, with such glorious instances of his own power and grace. . . . 'Why do you believe in Jesus?' asks the unbeliever. If you have this answer ready at hand, 'I have found the efficacy and power of the gospel in my heart;' this will be sufficient to answer every cavil.

The words of St. Paul to the Corinthians have a reference to our present subject. *Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us; written, not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart* (2 Cor. iii. 2, 3).

DR. I. WATTS.

A short Summary of Historical Evidence.

THE truth of Christianity depends upon its leading facts, and upon them alone. Now of these we have evidence which ought to satisfy us, at least until it appear that mankind have ever been deceived by the same. We have some uncontested and incontestable points, to which the his-

tory of the human species hath nothing singular to offer. A Jewish peasant changed the religion of the world, and that, without force, without power, without support; without one natural source or circumstance of attraction, influence, or success. Such a thing hath not happened in any other instance. The companions of this person, after he himself had been put to death for his attempt, asserted his supernatural character, founded upon his supernatural operations: and, in testimony of the truth of their assertions, i. e. in consequence of their own belief of that truth, and in order to communicate the knowledge of it to others, voluntarily entered upon lives of toil and hardship, and with a full experience of their danger, committed themselves to the last extremities of persecution. This hath not a parallel. More particularly, a very few days after this Person had been publicly executed, and in that very city in which he was buried, these his companions declared with one voice that his body was restored to life; that they had seen him, handled him, ate with him, conversed with him; and, in pursuance of their persuasion of the truth of what they told, preached his religion, with this strange fact as the foundation of it, in the face of those who had killed him, who were armed with the power of the country, and necessarily and naturally disposed to treat his followers as they had treated himself; and having done this upon the spot where the event took place, carried the intelligence of it abroad, in despite of difficulties and opposition, and where the nature of their errand gave them nothing to expect but derision, insult, and outrage.—This is without example. These three facts, I think, are certain, and would have been nearly so, if the gospels had never been written. The Christian story, as to these points, hath never varied. No other hath been set up against it. Every letter, every discourse, every controversy, amongst the followers of the religion; every book written by them, from the age of its commencement to the present time, in every part of the world in which it hath been professed, and with every sect into which it hath been divided (and we have letters and discourses written by contemporaries, by witnesses of the transaction, by persons themselves bearing a share in it, and other writings following that age in regular suc-

cession), *concur* in representing these facts in this manner. A religion, which now possesses the greatest part of the civilised world unquestionably sprang up at Jerusalem at this time. Some account must be given of its origin; some cause assigned for its rise. All the accounts of this origin, all the explications of this cause, whether taken from the writings of the early followers of the religion (in which, and in which perhaps alone, it could be expected that they should be distinctly unfolded), or from occasional notices in other writings of that or the adjoining age, either expressly allege the facts above stated as the means by which the religion was set up, or advert to its commencement in a manner which agrees with the supposition of these facts being true, and which testifies their operation and effects.

These propositions alone lay a foundation for our faith; for they prove the existence of a transaction, which cannot even in its most *general* parts be accounted for, upon any reasonable supposition, except that of the truth of the mission. But the particulars, the *detail* of the miracles or miraculous pretences (for such there necessarily must have been), upon which this unexampled transaction rested, and *for* which these men acted and suffered as they did act and suffer, it is undoubtedly of great importance to us to know. We *have* this detail from the fountain-head, from the persons themselves; in accounts written by eye-witnesses of the scene, by contemporaries and companions of those who were so; not in one book, but four, each containing enough for the verification of the religion, all agreeing in the fundamental parts of the history. We have the authenticity of these books established, by more and stronger proofs than belong to almost any other ancient book whatever, and by proofs which widely distinguish them from any others claiming a similar authority to theirs. If there were any good reason for doubt concerning the names to which these books are ascribed (which there is not, for they were never ascribed to any other, and we have evidence not long after their publication of their bearing the names which they now bear), their antiquity, of which there is no question, their reputation and authority amongst the early disciples of the religion, of which there is as little, form a

valid proof that they must, in the main at least, have agreed with what the first teachers of the religion delivered.

When we open these ancient volumes, we discover in them marks of truth, whether we consider each in itself, or collate them with one another. The writers certainly knew something of what they were writing about, for they manifest an acquaintance with local circumstances, with the history and usages of the times, which could only belong to an inhabitant of that country, living in that age. In every narrative we perceive simplicity and undesignedness; the air and the language of reality. When we compare the different narratives together, we find them so varying as to repel all suspicion of confederacy; so agreeing under this variety, as to show that the accounts had one real transaction for their common foundation; often attributing different actions and discourses to the person whose history, or rather memoirs of whose history they profess to relate; yet actions and discourses so similar, as very much to bespeak the same character: which is a coincidence that, in such writers as they were, could only be the consequence of their writing from fact, and not from imagination.

These four narratives are confined to the history of the Founder of the religion, and end with his ministry. Since, however, it is certain that the affair went on, we cannot help being anxious to know *how* it proceeded. This intelligence hath come down to us in a work purporting to be written by a person, himself connected with the business during the first stages of its progress, taking up the story where the former histories had left it, carrying on the narrative, oftentimes with great particularity, and throughout with the appearance of good sense,* information, and candour; stating all along the origin, and the only probable origin, of effects which unquestionably were produced, together with the natural consequences of situations which unquestionably did exist; and *confirmed*, in the substance at least of the account, by the strongest possible accession of testimony which a history can re-

* See Peter's speech on curing the cripple (Acts iii. 18), the council of the apostles (xv.), Paul's discourse at Athens (xvii. 22), before Agrippa (xxvi.). I notice these passages, both as fraught with good sense, and as free from the smallest tincture of enthusiasm.

ceive, *original letters*, written by the person who is the principal subject of the history, written upon the business to which the history relates, and during the period, or soon after the period, which the history comprises. No man can say that this all together is not a body of strong historical evidence.

DR. PALEY.

Any irresistible Evidence of the Gospel unnecessary.

THE advocates of Christianity do not pretend that its evidence is so irresistible, that no understanding can fail of being convinced by it: nor do they deny it to have been within the compass of divine power to have communicated to the world a higher degree of assurance, and to have given to his communication a stronger and more extensive influence. But the not having *more* evidence is not a sufficient reason for rejecting that which we already have. If such evidence were *irresistible*, it would restrain the voluntary powers too much, to answer the purpose of trial and probation: it would call for no exercise of candour, seriousness, humility, inquiry; no submission of passions, interests, and prejudices, to moral evidence, and to probable truth: no habits of reflection; none of that previous desire to learn and to obey the will of God, which forms the test of the virtuous principle, and which induces men to attend with care and reverence to every credible intimation of that will, and to resign present advantages and present pleasures to every reasonable expectation of propitiating his favor. 'Men's moral probation may be, whether they will take due care to inform themselves by *impartial* consideration; and, afterwards, whether they will act as the case requires upon the evidence which they have. And this, we find by experience, is often our probation, in our temporal capacity.'

Farther, if the evidence of the gospel were irresistible, it would leave no place for the admission of *internal evidence*; which ought to bear a considerable part in the proof of every revelation, because it is a species of evidence which applies itself to the knowledge, love, and practice of virtue, and which operates in proportion to the degree of those qualities which it finds in the person whom it addresses. Men of *good* dispositions, among Christians, are greatly affected

by the impression which the Scriptures themselves make on their minds; and their conviction is much strengthened by these impressions. It is likewise true that they who sincerely act, or sincerely endeavour to act, *according* to what they believe, that is, according to the just result of the probabilities, (or, if the reader please, the possibilities,) in natural and revealed religion, which they themselves perceive, and according to a rational estimate of consequences, and above all, according to the just effect of those principles of gratitude and devotion, which even the view of nature generates in a well ordered mind, *seldom fail of proceeding farther*. This also may have been exactly what was designed. On the contrary, where any persons never set themselves heartily and in earnest to be informed in religion,—or who secretly wish it may *not* prove true, and who are *less* attentive to evidence than to difficulties, and *more* attentive to objections than to what has long since been most satisfactorily said in answer to them;—such persons can scarcely be thought in a likely way of seeing the evidence of religion, though it were most certainly true, and capable of being ever so fully proved.

REV. T. H. HORNE.

Faith without Reasoning.

MIGHT we but see a miracle, say some, how gladly would we become converts! They would not speak thus did they understand what conversion means. They imagine that this work consists in the bare acknowledgment of God; and that his worship is mere lip service, little different from that which the heathen offered to their idols. True conversion is to annihilate ourselves, before this Sovereign Being, whom we have so often provoked, and who, at any time, may justly destroy us: it is to acknowledge that we can do nothing without him, and that we merit nothing from him but his wrath: it is to know, that there is a natural opposition between God and ourselves; and that, without a Mediator, there could be no intercourse between us.

Think it not strange, that the simple should believe without reasoning. God inspires them with the love of his justice, and with hatred of themselves. He inclines their hearts to believe. No man ever believes with a true and saving faith, unless

God inclines his heart: and, when God so inclines the heart, we shall believe. Of this David was sensible when he prayed, *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies.*

That some men believe without having examined the proofs of religion, is because they are of a holy frame of mind, and because what they hear affirmed by our religion is agreeable to such a temper.

They are sensible that God made them. They desire to love him alone, to hate none but themselves. They are sensible that they cannot do this of their own powers; that they cannot come to God; and that, unless he come to them, they can have no communication with him. And they hear our religion declare that we ought to love God alone, and to hate none but ourselves; but as we all are corrupt and alienated from God, God has become man, that he might unite himself to us. There needs no more to persuade men, who have this disposition of heart, together with this apprehension of their duty, and of their inability.

Those who are Christians, without the knowledge of prophecies or evidence, do yet form as good a judgment of their religion as those who possess this knowledge. They judge of it by the heart, as others judge by the understanding. It is God himself who inclines them to believe; and hence their faith is of the most effectual kind.

I admit that one of these Christians, who believes without evidence, is not qualified perhaps to convince an infidel who asks for evidence. But those who are better informed can with ease demonstrate, that such a believer does truly receive his faith from the inspiration of God, though he be unable himself to prove this.

PASCAL.

The success of Christianity a proof of its Divine authority.

A RELIGION which taught men to be meek and humble, disposed to receive injuries, but not to do any; a religion which gave countenance to the poor and lowly, at a time when riches were adored, and ambition and pleasure had possessed the hearts of all mankind; that such a religion in such an age, by the sermons and conduct of fishermen, men of mean breeding and illiberal arts, should so speedily triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the discourses of the eloquent, the power of

princes, and the interests of states, the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, the force of custom and the solicitation of passion, the pleasures of sin and the busy arts of the devil; that is, against wit and power, superstition and wilfulness, fame and money, nature and empire, which are all the causes in this world that can make a thing impossible; this, this is to be ascribed to the power of God, and is the great demonstration of the resurrection of Jesus. Every thing was an argument for it, and improved it; no objection could hinder it, no enemies destroy it; whatsoever was for it made the religion to increase; whatsoever was against it made it to increase. If the Christians had peace, they went abroad and brought in converts; if they had persecution, the converts came in to them. In prosperity they allured and enticed the world by the beauty of holiness; in affliction and trouble they amazed all men with the splendour of their innocence, and the glories of their patience. Quickly therefore it was, that the world became disciple to the glorious Nazarene; and men could no longer doubt of the resurrection of Jesus, when it became demonstrated by the certainty of those who saw it, and the courage of those who died for it, and the multitude of those who believed it; who by their sermons and their actions, by their public offices and discourses, by festivals and sacraments, by arguments of sense and experience, by reason and religion, by persuading unrational men, and establishing believing Christians, by their living in the obedience, and dying for the testimony of Jesus, have greatly advanced his kingdom, and his power, and his glory, into which he entered, upon his resurrection from the dead.

BP. TAYLOR.

The partial Reception of Christianity cannot justify its Rejection.

OF a revelation which really came from God, the proof, it has been said, would in all ages be so public and manifest, that no part of the human species would remain ignorant of it, no understanding could fail of being convinced by it.

The advocates of Christianity do not pretend that the evidence of their religion possesses these qualities. They do not deny that we can conceive it to be within the compass of Divine power to have communicated to the world a higher de-

gree of assurance, and to have given to his communication a stronger and more extensive influence. For any thing we are able to discern, God could have so formed men, as to have perceived the truths of religion intuitively; or to have carried on a communication with the other world, whilst they lived in this; or to have seen the individuals of the species, instead of dying, pass to heaven by a sensible translation. He could have presented a separate miracle to each man's senses. He could have established a standing miracle. He could have caused miracles to be wrought in every different age and country. These, and many more methods, which we may imagine, if we once give loose to our imaginations, are, so far as we can judge, all practicable.

The question therefore is, not whether Christianity possesses the highest possible degree of evidence, but whether the not having more evidence be a sufficient reason for rejecting that which we have.

Now there appears to be no fairer method of judging concerning any dispensation which is alleged to come from God, when a question is made whether such a dispensation could come from God or not, than by comparing it with other things which are acknowledged to proceed from the same counsel, and to be produced by the same agency. If the dispensation in question labor under no defects but what apparently belong to other dispensations, these seeming defects do not justify us in setting aside the proofs which are offered of its authenticity, if they be otherwise entitled to credit.

Throughout that order then of nature, of which God is the Author, what we find is a system of beneficence; we are seldom or never able to make out a system of optimism. I mean, that there are few cases in which, if we permit ourselves to range in possibilities, we cannot suppose something more perfect, and more unobjectionable, than what we see. The rain which descends from heaven is confessedly amongst the contrivances of the Creator, for the sustentation of the animals and vegetables which subsist upon the surface of the earth. Yet how partially and irregularly is it supplied! How much of it falls upon the sea, where it can be of no use! how often it is wanted where it would be of the greatest! What tracts of continent are rendered desert by

the scarcity of it! Or, not to speak of extreme cases, how much, sometimes, do inhabited countries suffer by its deficiency or delay!—We could imagine, if to imagine were our business, the matter to be otherwise regulated. We could imagine showers to fall, just where and when they would do good; always seasonable, every where sufficient; so distributed as not to leave a field upon the face of the globe scorched by drought, or even a plant withering for the lack of moisture. Yet, does the difference between the real case and the imagined case, or the seeming inferiority of the one to the other, authorise us to say that the present disposition of the atmosphere is not amongst the productions or the designs of the Deity? Does it check the inference which we draw from the confessed beneficence of the provision? or does it make us cease to admire the contrivance?—The observation which we have exemplified in the single instance of the rain of heaven, may be repeated concerning most of the phenomena of nature; and the true conclusion to which it leads is this: that to inquire what the Deity might have done, could have done, or, as we even sometimes presume to speak, ought to have done, or, in hypothetical cases, would have done, and to build any propositions upon such inquiries against evidence of facts, is wholly unwarrantable. It is a mode of reasoning which will not do in natural history, which cannot therefore be applied with safety to revelation. It may have some foundation in certain speculative *a priori* ideas of the Divine attributes; but it has none in experience, or in analogy. The general character of the works of nature is, on the one hand, goodness both in design and effect; and, on the other hand, a liability to difficulty, and to objections, if such objections be allowed, by reason of seeming incompleteness or uncertainty in attaining their end. Christianity participates of this character. The true similitude between nature and revelation consists in this; that they each bear strong marks of their original; that they each also bear appearances of irregularity and defect. A system of strict optimism may nevertheless be the real system in both cases. But what I contend is, that the proof is hidden from us; that we ought not to expect to perceive that in revelation, which we hardly

perceive in any thing ; that beneficence, of which we can judge, ought to satisfy us ; that optimism, of which we cannot judge, ought not to be sought after. We can judge of beneficence, because it depends upon effects which we experience, and upon the relation between the means which we see acting and the ends which we see produced. We cannot judge of optimism, because it necessarily implies a comparison of that which is tried, with that which is not tried ; of consequences which we see, with others which we imagine, and concerning many of which it is more than probable we know nothing ; concerning some, that we have no notion.

DR. PALEY.

The Gospel alone furnishes a consistent scheme of Religion.

THE gospel takes man where it finds him, in a state of sin and ruin, condemned by the law of God to final perdition, and incapable of justification, by his own righteousness. In this situation it announces to him a Saviour, divinely great and glorious, divinely excellent and lovely ; assuming his nature to become an expiation for his sins ; revealing to him the way of reconciliation to God ; and inviting him to enter it and be saved. The acceptance of this expiation it announces from the mouth of God himself. . . . To overcome the stubbornness of the heart, Christ has commissioned the Spirit of grace to sanctify us for himself, to draw us with the cords of his love, to guide us with his wisdom, to uphold us with his power, and to conduct us under his kind providence to heaven. In this scheme is contained all that we need, and all that we can rationally desire. The way of salvation is here become ‘ a highway, and wayfaring men, though fools, need not err therein.’

The religion of the gospel is a religion designed for sinners. By the expiation of Christ it opens the brazen door which was for ever barred against their return. Here the supreme and otherwise immovable obstacle to the acceptance of sinners is taken away. If sinners were to be accepted, it was not *possible that this cup should pass from Christ*. The next great obstacle in the way of their acceptance is found in their unholy, disobedient hearts, propense to *evil only, and continually* ; and the next, their perpetual

exposure to backsliding, and to falling finally away. These obstacles, immovable also by any means on this side of heaven, the Spirit of grace, by his most merciful interference in our behalf, entirely removes. Man, therefore, in the gospel finds his return from apostacy made possible, made easy, made certain ; actually begun, steadily carried on in the present world, and finally completed in the world to come.

But no other scheme of religion presents to us even plausible means of removing these difficulties. Natural religion, to which infidels persuade us to betake ourselves for safety, does not even promise us a return to God. Natural religion is the religion of law ; of that law, which in the only legal language declares to us, *Do these things, and thou shalt live ; but the soul that sinneth shall die*. These things, the things specified in the requisitions of the law, we have not done ; and therefore cannot live. We have sinned, and therefore must die. The law knows no condition of acceptance or justification, but obedience. Concerning repentance, faith, forgiveness, and reconciliation, concerning the sinner’s return to God, and his admission to immortal life, the law is silent. Its only sentence pronounced on those who disobey is a sentence of final condemnation.

Whatever we may suppose the law to be, we have disobeyed its precepts. Nothing has been ever devised or received by man, as a law of God, which all men have not disobeyed. Infidels cannot devise such a law as they will dare to call a law of God, and publish to men under this title, which they themselves, and all other men, have not often disobeyed. From the very nature of law, a nature inseparable from its existence as a law, disobedience to its precepts must be condemned ; and if nothing interfere to preserve the offender from punishment, he must of necessity suffer. To what degree, in what modes, through what extent, these sufferings will reach, the infidel cannot conjecture. To his anguish no end appears. Of such an end no arguments can be furnished by his mind, no tidings have reached his ear, and no hopes can rationally arise in his heart. Death, with all the gloomy scenes attendant upon a dying bed, is to him merely the commencement of doubt, fear, and sorrow. The grave to him is the

entrance into a world of absolute and eternal darkness. That world, hung round with fear, amazement, and despair, overcast with midnight, melancholy with solitude, desolate of every hope of real good, opens to him through the dreary passage of the grave. Beyond this entrance he sees nothing, he knows nothing, he can conjecture nothing, but what must fill his heart with alarm, and make his death-bed a couch of thorns. With a suspense scarcely less terrible than the miseries of damnation itself, his soul lingers over the vast and desolate abyss; when, compelled by an unseen and irresistible hand, it plunges into this uncertain and irreversible doom, to learn by experience what is the measure of woe destined to reward those *who obey not God*, and reject the salvation proffered by his Son.

In such a situation what man not yet lost to sense and thought, not yet convinced that he has committed the sin which cannot be forgiven, would not hail with transport the dawn of the gospel; the clear rising of the Sun of Righteousness, to illumine his path through this melancholy world, to dispel the darkness of the grave, to shed a benevolent light upon the entrance into eternity, and brighten his passage to heaven?

DWIGHT.

The Gospel confirms and enlarges the hopes of Natural Religion.

ONE would imagine the gospel should easily find credit with men, when all its promises do so exactly tally and correspond with the hopes of nature. Has nature any reason to complain of this? Is it an objection to the gospel that it has confirmed all your hopes and expectations, that it has given you the security of God's promise to establish the very wishes of your heart? You trust, you say, that he who made you still retains some love for you: to convince you that he does, *he has sent his well-beloved Son into the world to save sinners*. Though you offend, yet you hope on repentance to be forgiven; the gospel confirms this hope; the terms of it are more beneficial, and convey to true penitents not only hope, but a claim to pardon. But pardon only will not satisfy; there is still something farther that Nature craves; something which, with unutterable groans, she pants after, even life and happiness for evermore. She sees all her chil-

dren go down to the grave; all beyond the grave is to her one wide waste, a land of doubt and uncertainty: when she looks into it, she has her hopes and she has her fears; and, agitated by the vicissitude of these passions, she finds no ground whereon to rest her foot. How different is the scene which the gospel opens! there we see the heavenly Canaan, the new Jerusalem; in which city of the great God there are mansions, many mansions, for receiving them, *who through faith and patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and immortality*. Our blessed Master has abolished death, and redeemed us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, that we may dwell in his presence as long as time itself shall last.

If we were to form a system of religion for ourselves, that should answer to all our wishes and desires, what more could we ask for ourselves than what the gospel has offered? The obedience required of us is the same to which we are antecedently bound, in virtue of that reason and understanding which make us to be men. The promises of the gospel extend to more than Nature could ever claim; ~~they~~ take in all her wishes, establish all her hopes, and they are offered by a hand that is able to make them good.

The conclusion of the whole is, that since the religion of a sinner must necessarily be founded in the hopes of mercy; since these hopes have at best but uncertain foundation in natural religion, and are liable to be disturbed and shaken by frequent doubts and misgivings of mind; we have great reason to bless and adore the goodness of God, who has openly displayed before our eyes the love that he has for the children of men, by sending *his well-beloved Son into the world, that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*. SHERLOCK.

Necessity for inculcating the Doctrines as well as Precepts of the Gospel.

SOME are of the mind that the whole business of ministers is to be conversant in and about morality. For this fountain and spring of grace, (the righteousness and satisfaction of Christ,) this basis of eternal glory; this evidence and demonstration of divine wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and love; this great discovery of the purity of the law and vileness of sin; this first, great, principal subject of the

gospel, and motive of faith and obedience ; this root and cause of all peace with God, all sincere and incorrupted love toward him, of all joy and consolation from him, they think it scarcely deserves a place in the objects of their contemplation, and are ready to guess, that what men write and talk about it, is but phrases, canting, and fanatical. But such as are admitted into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ will not so easily part with their immortal interest and concern therein. Yea, I fear not to say, that he is likely to be the best, the most humble, the most holy and fruitful Christian, who is most sedulous and diligent in spiritual inquiries into this great mystery, of the reconciliation of God unto sinners by the blood of the cross, and in the exercise of faith about it. Nor is there any such powerful means of preserving the soul in a constant abhorrence of sin, and watchfulness against it, as a due apprehension of what it cost to make atonement for it.

DR. OWEN.

How insufficient every human scheme is (however commended by all that is able and learned, and however designed to guard against real abuses,) how utterly ineffective every system, except the simple gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, dying for sinners, to maintain and carry forward the church of God! The merely rational system of religion without the peculiarities of the Bible, is both inefficient and injurious. Talk they of policy? the simplicity of Scriptural truth is the best policy. See what it did in Luther. You may perhaps, by human wisdom, escape the reproach of the cross, gain the admiration of man, rise to the highest ranks of human honor and emolument, but you part with truth, you lose your usefulness, you deteriorate the gospel, and you injure the cause of God. You may have the star-light of a cold, frosty night, but you lose the cheering, enlivening, and fructifying warmth of the glorious sun. What if the outworks are defended, where is the advantage, if those within the citadel withhold from us the privileges and the blessings of the kingdom? May the witness for Christ never hand down to posterity a lifeless, inefficient, and human system, which thousands shall unprofitably follow, instead of the life-giving, and divine gospel, the power of God unto salvation!

BICKERSTETH.

Let us, who are appointed to inspire others with these sentiments, take care lest we neglect the most essential point of preaching. It is by no means sufficient to exhort, to preach morality, to insist on the practice of Christian virtues: but, if we are in earnest to make Christians, let the principal point of Christianity be our chief theme. The doctrine of Jesus Christ is not barely a doctrine of morality; no, it is the doctrine of faith and of the cross, and all Christian morality is grounded upon faith in Jesus Christ; hence it derives both its perfection and energy. Preachers of the gospel are perhaps not always sufficiently attentive to this consideration. A certain method of preaching has been introduced, which is very different from that of the apostles. Many make worldly eloquence their chief aim in preaching, and employ all their faculties upon it; as if elegant discourses, brilliant thoughts, lively and bold expressions, or artful gestures, could convert men and make them Christians. Others preach rather like philosophers than as ministers of Jesus Christ. In preaching they imitate Plato, Socrates, or Seneca, and rarely venture beyond natural religion. This reasoning is great, this moral precept excellent; the reflexions turn sometimes on the beauty of virtue, on the deformity of vice, sometimes on the good of society, at other times on the human heart. All these reflections may be just, and have their use; but the principal matter in such discourses is deficient: Jesus Christ, his cross, his grace, his Spirit, come in for a very small share. The unction is wanting; and can we wonder if such preaching be fruitless?

Do we wish to lead men to God, let us begin by leading them to Jesus Christ. Let us preach the gospel, as our teachers, the blessed apostles, preached it. They gloried in being preachers of the cross; they determined not to know any thing, either with respect to the ground of their doctrine, or the manner of preaching it, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

OSTERWALD.

The ignorant think highly of themselves, if instead of proclaiming the mysteries of faith, they insist on the necessity of speaking home to the conscience, preaching good works, and censuring vice. But they destroy the chief and essential part

of Christianity. It is an error to imagine that a good life consists in works only; as if a sound belief were not necessary to a Christian walk. It is an error to say, that preaching the mysteries of religion does not tend to the real improvement of the hearers. The same objection is made by the Jews, when speaking of the gospel, they ask, Can any one become a better man by knowing that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, and that he was crucified, dead, and buried? It is again an error to suppose, that virtues ought to be taught by a bare description and by precepts, as morality is usually taught: for that is planting a tree by the branches, instead of planting it by the root. Let us here consider the motives, which God makes use of, when he insists on good works. The Scriptures invite us to the practice of virtue, and to the hatred of sin, because we have been baptised into the death of Jesus, and buried with him; because *Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us*; because *Christ was raised from the dead, and death hath no more dominion over him*. What arguments are these? In order to encourage us to good works the Scriptures introduce articles of faith. Nay, more; they invite us by reasons which might seem to imply even the contrary. Will this inspire us with fear, and wean us from sin, when we are told that *we are no longer under the law, but under grace*, and that *God hath appointed us to obtain salvation*? (Rom. vi. 14. Thess. v. 9.) Does not this belief seem to be rather suited (as some falsely imagine) to introduce libertinism, than the dread of sin? But let ignorance judge as it may; let it rate the mysteries by which faith is planted and watered entirely useless; this faith is still the root of all virtue; by it our hearts are purified; and without this it is impossible to produce good fruit.

JOHN DESPAGNE.

The genuine preachers of the gospel are those who give a faithful account of the history of Jesus Christ, and the fruits of it; who, when they call on men to forsake their sins, direct them to the merits of Jesus Christ only, and not to any supposed strength of our nature, for every thing that belongs to conversion and to the remission of sins. All such as separate, or mutilate these two objects, and talk of a conversion without Jesus Christ,

can by no means be deemed preachers of the gospel.

All ministers of the gospel are called to bear witness of Jesus. Jesus Christ himself called the apostles *his witnesses*, and the aim of their witness is, to bring all men to believe in Jesus Christ, and to ground their whole salvation upon him alone.

GUALTER.

The Glory of God Displayed in the Gospel.

THERE is nothing wherein God hath so much put himself, wherein he may be so fully known, communicated with, depended upon, and praised, as in his gospel. This is a glass in which the blessed angels do see and admire that unsearchable riches of his mercy to the church, which they had not by their own observation found out from the immediate view of his glorious presence. In the creatures we have him a God of power and wisdom, working all things in number, weight, and measure, by the secret vigour of his providence upholding that being which he gave them, and ordering them to those glorious ends for which he gave it. In the law we have him a God of vengeance and of recompense, in the publication thereof threatening, and in the execution thereof inflicting wrath upon those that transgress it. But in the gospel, we have him a God of bounty and endless compassion, humbling himself that he might be merciful to his enemies, that he might himself bear the punishments of those injuries which had been done unto himself, that he might not offer only, but beseech his own prisoners to be pardoned and reconciled again. In the creature he is a God above us, in the law he is a God against us; only in the gospel he is Immanuel, a God with us, a God like us, a God for us.

BP. REYNOLDS.

God will ever dwell in spotless light, howsoever we paint him and disfigure him here below: he will still be circled about with his own rays of unstained and immaculate glory. And though the gospel be not God as he is in his own brightness, but God veiled and masked to us, God in a state of humiliation and condescendence, as the sun in a rainbow; yet it is nothing else but a clear and unspotted mirror of divine holiness, goodness, purity; in which attributes lies the very life and essence of

God himself. The gospel is nothing else but God descending into the world in our form, and conversing with us in our likeness; that he might allure and draw us up to God, and make us partakers of his divine form. Θεὸς γέγυρεν ἄνθρωπος (as

Athanasius speaks) ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐν ἑαυτῷ θεοποιήσῃ, 'God was therefore incarnated and made man, that he might deify us,' that is (as St. Peter expresseth it), make us *partakers of the divine nature*.

CUDWORTH.

SECTION II.—OF GOD.

The Being of God.

THERE is a God. Here I cannot help fearing, that when we endeavour to confirm this leading truth, with regard to the first and uncreated Being, by a long and labored series of arguments, we may seem, instead of a service, to do a kind of injury to God and man both; for why should we use the pitiful light of a candle to discover the sun, and eagerly go about to prove the being of him who gave being to every thing else; who alone exists necessarily, nay, we may boldly say, who alone exists, seeing all other things were by him extracted out of nothing, and, when compared with him, are nothing, and even less than nothing, and vanity. And would not any man think himself insulted, should it be suspected that he doubted of the being of him, without whom he could neither doubt, nor think, nor be at all? This persuasion, without doubt, is innate, and strongly impressed upon the mind of man, if any thing at all can be said to be so. . . .

But because we have too many of that sort of fools that say in their heart, *There is no God*; and if we are not to answer a fool so as to be like unto him, yet we are, by all means, to *answer him according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit*: again, because a criminal forgetfulness of this leading truth is the sole source of all the wickedness in the world; and, finally, because it may not be quite unprofitable nor unpleasant, even to the best of men, sometimes to recollect their thoughts on this subject, but, on the contrary a very pleasant exercise to every well disposed mind to reflect upon what a solid and unshaken foundation the whole fabric of religion is built, and to think and speak of the eternal Fountain of goodness and of all other beings, and consequently of his necessary existence; we reckon it will not be amiss to give a few thoughts upon

it. Therefore, not to insist upon several arguments which are urged with great advantage on this subject, we shall produce only one or two, and shall reason thus—

It is by all means necessary that there should be some eternal Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been; since it must be a most shocking contradiction to say that any thing could have produced itself out of nothing. But if we say that any thing existed from eternity, it is most agreeable to reason that that should be an eternal mind, or thinking Being, that so the noblest property may be ascribed to the most exalted Being. Nay, that eternal Being must of absolute necessity excel in wisdom and power, and indeed in every other perfection, since it must itself be uncreated, and the cause and origin of all the creatures; otherwise some difficulty will remain concerning their production. And thus all the parts of the universe, taken singly, suggest arguments in favor of their Creator.

The beautiful order of the universe, and the mutual relation that subsists between all its parts, present us with another strong and convincing argument. This order is itself an effect, and indeed a wonderful one; and it is also evidently distinct from the things themselves, taken singly; therefore it must proceed from some cause, and a cause endowed with superior wisdom; for it would be the greatest folly, as well as impudence, to say it could be owing to mere chance. Now it could not proceed from man, nor could it be owing to any concert or mutual agreement between the things themselves, separately considered, seeing the greatest part of them are evidently incapable of consultation and concert. It must therefore proceed from some one superior Being, and that Being is God, 'who commanded the stars to move by stated laws, the fruits of the earth to be produced at different seasons, the changeable moon to shine

with borrowed light, and the sun with his own.'

He is the monarch of the universe, and the most absolute monarch in nature; for who else assigned to every rank of creatures its particular form and uses, so that the stars, subjected to no human authority or laws, should be placed on high, and serve to bring about to the earth and the inhabitants thereof, the regular returns of day and night, and distinguish the seasons of the year? Let us take, in particular, any one species of sublunary things—for instance, man, the noblest of all—and see how he came by the form wherewith he is invested, that frame or constitution of body, that vigor of mind, and that precise rank in the nature of things, which he now obtains, and no other. He must certainly either have made choice of these things for himself, or must have had them assigned him by another, whom we must consider as the principal actor, and sole architect of the whole fabric. That he made choice of them for himself, nobody will imagine; for either he made this choice before he had any existence of his own, or after he began to be: but it is not easy to say which of these suppositions is most absurd. It remains, therefore, that he must be indebted for all he enjoys to the mere good pleasure of his great and all-wise Creator, who framed his earthly body in such a wonderful and surprising manner, animated him with his own breath, and thus introduced him into this great palace of his which we now behold, where his manifold wisdom, most properly so called, displays itself so gloriously in the whole machine and in every one of its wonderfully variegated parts.

The first argument, taken from the very being of things, may be further illustrated by the same instance of man; for unless the first man was created, we must suppose an infinite series of generations from eternity, and so the human race must be supposed independent, and to owe its being to itself. But, by this hypothesis, mankind came into the world by generation; therefore every individual of the race owes its being to another; consequently the whole race is from itself, and at the same time from another; which is absurd: therefore the hypothesis implies a plain and evident contradiction.

'O immense wisdom that produced the world! Let us for ever admire the riches and

skill of thy right hand;' often viewing with attention thy wonders, and, while we view them, frequently crying out with the divine psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches! From everlasting to everlasting thou art God, and besides thee there is no other.* And with Hermes, 'The Father of all, being himself understanding, life, and brightness, created man like himself, and cherished him as his own son. Thou Creator of universal nature, who hast extended the earth, who poiseest the heavens, and commandest the waters to flow from all the parts of the sea, we praise thee, who art the one exalted God, for by thy will all things are perfected.'

In vain would any one endeavour to evade the force of our argument, by substituting nature in the place of God, as the principle and cause of this beautiful order; for either, by nature, he understands the particular frame and composition of every single thing—which would be saying nothing at all to the purpose in hand, because it is evident that this manifold nature, which in most instances is quite void of reason, could never be the cause of that beautiful order and harmony which is every where conspicuous throughout the whole system; or, he means a universal and intelligent nature, disposing and ordering every thing to advantage. But this is only another name for God; of whom it may be said, in a sacred sense, that he, as an infinite nature and mind, pervades and fills all his works—not as an informing form, according to the expression of the schools, and as the part of a compounded whole, which is the idlest fiction that can be imagined; for, at this rate, he must not only be a part of the vilest insects, but also of stocks, and stones, and clods of earth; but a pure, unmixed nature, which orders and governs all things with the greatest freedom and wisdom, and supports them with unwearied and almighty power. In this acceptance, when you name nature, you mean God. Seneca's words are very apposite to this purpose: 'Whithersoever you turn yourself, you see God meeting you. Nothing excludes his presence. He fills all his works. Therefore it is in vain for thee, most ungrateful of all men, to say that thou art not indebted to God, but to nature, because they are, in fact, the

same. If thou hadst received any thing from Seneca, and should say, thou owedst it to Annæus or Lucius, thou wouldst not thereby change thy creditor, but only his name, because whether thou mentionest his name or his surname, his person is still the same.'

An evident and most natural consequence of this universal and necessary idea of a God, is his unity. All who mention the term God, intend to convey by it the idea of the first, most exalted, necessarily existent, and infinitely perfect Being: and it is plain there can be but one Being endued with all these perfections. Nay, even the polytheism that prevailed among the heathen nations was not carried so far, but that they acknowledged one God, by way of eminence, as supreme and absolutely above all the rest, whom they styled the greatest and best of Beings, and the Father of gods and men. From him all the rest had their being and all that they were, and from him also they had the title of gods, but still in a limited and subordinate sense. In confirmation of this, we meet with very many of the clearest testimonies with regard to the unity of God in the works of all the heathen authors. That of Sophocles is very remarkable: 'There is indeed,' says he, 'one God, and but one, who has made the heavens, and the wide extended earth, the blue surges of the sea, and the strength of the winds.'

As to the mystery of the sacred Trinity, which has a near and necessary connexion with the present subject, I always thought it was to be received and adored with the most humble faith, but by no means to be curiously searched into, or perplexed with the absurd questions of the schoolmen. We fell by an arrogant ambition after knowledge; by mere faith we rise again, and are reinstated. And this mystery indeed, rather than any other, seems to be a tree of knowledge, prohibited to us while we sojourn in these mortal bodies. This most profound mystery, though obscurely represented by the shadows of the Old Testament, rather than clearly revealed, was not unknown to the most ancient and celebrated doctors among the Jews, nor altogether unattested, however obstinately later authors may maintain the contrary. Nay, learned men have observed, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are expressly acknowledged in the

books of the cabalists, and they produce surprising things to this purpose out of the book of Zohar, which is ascribed to R. Simcon, Ben. Joch, and some other cabalistical writers. Nay, the book just now mentioned, after saying a great deal concerning the Three in one essence, adds, that 'this secret will not be revealed to all till the coming of the Messias.' I insist not upon what is said of the name consisting of twelve letters, and another larger one of forty-two, as containing a fuller explication of that most sacred name, which they call Hammephorash.

Nor is it improbable, that some dawn at least of this mystery had reached even the heathen philosophers. There are some who think they can prove, by arguments of no inconsiderable weight, that Anaxagoras, by his *νοῦς*, or mind, meant nothing but the Son or Wisdom that made the world. But the testimonies are clearer, which you find frequently among the Platonic philosophers concerning the Three subsisting from one. Moreover, they all call the self-existent Being the 'creating word,' or 'the mind and the soul of the world.' But the words of the Egyptian Hermes are very surprising: 'The mind, which is God, together with his word, produced another creating mind; nor do they differ from one another, for their union is life.'

But what we now insist upon is, the plain and evident necessity of one supreme, and therefore of one only principle of all things, and the harmonious agreement of mankind in the belief of the absolute necessity of this same principle.

This is the God whom we admire, whom we worship, whom we entirely love, or, at least, whom we desire to love above all things; whom we can neither express in words nor conceive in our thoughts; and the less we are capable of these things, so much the more necessary it is to adore him with the profoundest humility, and to love him with the greatest intenseness and fervor. ABP. LEIGHTON.

The Attributes of God.

THEOLOGICAL writers mention three methods whereby men come to some kind of knowledge of God themselves, and communicate that knowledge to others—the way of negation, the way of causation, and the way of eminence. Yet the very terms that are used to express these ways

show what a faint knowledge of the invisible Being is to be attained by them ; so that the two last may be justly reduced to the first, and all our knowledge of this kind called negative. For to pretend to give any explanation of the divine essence, as distinct from what we call his attributes, would be a refinement so absurd, that, under the appearance of more accurate knowledge, it would betray our ignorance the more. And so unaccountable would it be to attempt any such thing with regard to the unsearchable majesty of God, that possibly the most towering and exalted genius on earth ought frankly to acknowledge, that we know neither our own essence, nor that of any other creature, even the meanest and most contemptible. Though in the schools they distinguish the divine attributes or excellencies, and that by no means improperly, into communicable and incommunicable, yet we ought so to guard this distinction, as always to remember that those which are called communicable, when applied to God, are not only to be understood in a manner incommunicable and quite peculiar to himself, but also, that in him they are, in reality, infinitely different from those virtues, or rather, in a matter where the disparity of the subjects is so very great, those shadows of virtues, that go under the same name either in men or angels ; for it is not only true, that all things in the infinite and eternal Being are infinite and eternal, but they are also, though in a manner quite inexpressible, *himself*. He is good without quality, great without quantity. He is good in such a sense as to be called, by the evangelist, the only good Being. He is also the only wise Being ; *the only wise God*, saith the apostle. And the same apostle tells us, in another place, that *he only hath immortality*, that is, from his own nature, and not from the will or disposition of another. ‘ If we are considered as joined to or united with God,’ says an ancient writer of great note, ‘ we have a being ; we live, and in some sort are wise ; but, if we are compared with God, we have no wisdom at all, nor do we live, or so much as have any existence.’ All other things were by him brought out of nothing, in consequence of a free act of his will, by means of his infinite power ; so that they may be justly called mere contingences, and he is the

only necessarily existent Being. Nay, he is the only really existent Being ; *τὸ ὄντως ὄν*, or, as Plotinus expresses it, *τὸ ὑπέροχως ὄν* ; thus also the Septuagint speaks of him as the only existent Being, *ὁ ὢν*. And so also does a heathen poet. This is likewise implied in the exalted name Jehovah, which expresses his being, and that he has it from himself ; but what that being is, or wherein its essence, so to speak, consists, it does not say ; nor, if it did, could we at all conceive it. Nay, so far is that name from discovering what his being is, that it plainly insinuates that his existence is hid and covered with a veil. *I am who I am*, or *I am what I am*. As if he had said—I myself know what I am, but you neither know nor can know it ; and if I should declare wherein my being consists, you could not conceive it. He has however manifested in his works, and in his word, what it is our interest to know, that he is *the Lord God, merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth*.

We call him a most pure Spirit, and mean to say, that he is of a nature entirely incorporeal ; yet this word, in the Greek, Hebrew, and all other languages, according to its primitive and natural signification, conveys no other idea than that of a gentle gale of wind, which every one knows to be a body, though rarefied to a very great degree ; so that when we speak of that infinite Purity, all words fail us ; and even when we think of it, all the refinements of the acutest understanding are quite at a stand, and become entirely useless.

It is, in every respect, as necessary to acknowledge his eternity, as his being ; provided that, when we mention the term God, we mean by it the first Being, supposing that expression to include also his self-existence. This idea of a first and eternal Being is again inseparably connected with an infinite degree of all possible perfection, together with immutability and absolute perseverance therein.

In like manner, if we suppose God to be the first of all beings, we must unavoidably therefrom conclude his unity. As to the ineffable Trinity subsisting in this unity, a mystery discovered only by the sacred Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, where it is more clearly revealed than in the Old, let others boldly pry into

it, if they please, while we receive it with an humble faith, and think it sufficient for us to admire and adore.

The other attributes that used to be mentioned on this subject may be supposed to be perfectly comprehended under the following three; power, wisdom, and goodness: for holiness, justice, mercy, infinite bounty, may be, with great propriety, ranked under the general term of goodness.

But rather than insist upon metaphysical speculations, let us, while we walk daily in these pleasant fields, be constantly culling fresh and never-fading flowers. When the psalmist cries out, *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and of his greatness there is no end*, 'he wanted to show,' says Augustine, 'how great he is. But how can this be done? Though he repeated *great, great*, the whole day, it would have been to little purpose, for he must have ended at last, because the day would have ended; but his greatness was before the beginning of days, and will reach beyond the end of time.' The poet expresses himself admirably well; 'I will praise thee, O blessed God, with my voice; I will praise thee also with silence; for thou, O inexpressible Father, who canst never be known, understandest the silence of the mind, as well as any words or expressions.' ABP. LEIGHTON.

The Omnipresence of God.

THE knowledge of God is not a bare knowledge, his presence is not an idle presence; it is an active knowledge, it is a presence accompanied with action and motion. We said just now that God was every where, because he influenced all, as far as influence could agree with his perfections. Remark this restriction, for as we are discussing a subject the most fertile in controversy; and as, in a discourse of an hour, it is impossible to answer all objections, which may be all answered elsewhere; we would give a general preservative against every mistake. We mean an influence which agrees with the divine perfections; and if from any of our general propositions you infer any consequences injurious to those perfections, you may conclude, for that very reason, that you have stretched them beyond their due bounds. We repeat it, then, God influenceth all things, as far as such influence agrees with his perfections.

When new beings appear, he is there. He influences their production. He gives to all life, motion, and being, Acts xvii. 28. *Thou, even thou art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth and all things that are therein; the seas and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee*, Neh. ix. 6. *O Lord, I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them*, Psal. cxxxix. 14, 15, 16. *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about. Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

When beings are preserved, he is there. He influences their preservation. *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thou preservest man and beast*, Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6. *When thou openest thy hand they are filled with good: thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth*, Psal. civ. 28, 29, 30.

When the world is disordered, he is there. He influenceth wars, pestilences, famines, and all the vicissitudes which disorder the world. If Nature refuse her productions, it is because he hath *made the heaven as iron, and the earth as brass*, Lev. xxvi. 19. If peace succeed war, he makes both. If *lions slay the inhabitants of Samaria*, it is *the Lord who sends them*, 2 Kings xvii. 25. When tempestuous winds break down those immense banks which your industry has opposed to them, when a devouring fire reduceth your houses to ashes, it is he who *makes the winds his messengers, and his ministers flames of fire*, Psal. civ. 4.

When every thing succeeds according to our wishes, he is there. He influenceth prosperity. *Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watch-*

man waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows. It is God who giveth his beloved sleep, Psal. cxvii. 1, 2.

When our understanding is informed, he is there. He influenceth our knowledge. *For in his light we see light,* Psal. xxxvi. 9. *He lighteth every man that cometh into the world,* John i. 9.

When our heart disposeth us to our duties, he is there. He influenceth our virtues. It is he who *worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure,* Phil. ii. 13. It is he who *giveth us not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake,* chap. i. 29. It is he who *giveth to all that ask him liberally, and upbraideth not,* James i. 5.

When the grossest errors cover us, he is there. He influenceth errors. It is God who *sends strong delusions that men should believe a lie,* 2 Thess. ii. 11. *Go make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,* Isa. vi. 10.

When we violate the laws of righteousness, he is there. He influenceth sins, even the greatest sins. Witness Pharaoh, whose *heart he hardened,* Exod. iv. 21. Witness Shimei, whom *the Lord bade to curse David,* 2 Sam. xvi. 11. Witness what Isaiah said, *the Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt,* ch. xix. 14.

When magistrates, or earthly gods, consult and deliberate, he is there. He influenceth policy. It is he who *hath the hearts of kings in his hand, and turneth them as the rivers of water,* Prov. xxi. 1. It is he who *giveth kings in his anger, and taketh them away in his wrath,* Hosea xiii. 11. It is he who *maketh the Assyrian the rod of his anger,* Isaiah x. 5. *Herod and Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel did what his hand and his counsel determined before to be done,* Acts iv. 27, 28.

When we live, when we die, he is there. He influenceth life and death. *Man's days are determined; the number of his months are with him; he has appointed his bounds that he cannot pass,* Job xiv. 5. *To God the Lord belongs the issues from death,* Psalm lxxviii. 20. *He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up,* 1 Sam. ii. 6.

He influences the least events as well as

the most considerable. Not being fatigued with the care of great things, he can occupy himself about the smallest without prejudice to the rest; *number the hairs of our heads,* and not let even *a sparrow fall without his will,* Matt. x. 29, 30.

But, when God communicates himself to all, when he thus acts on all, when he diffuseth himself thus through the whole, he connects all with his own designs, and makes all serve his own counsels: and this is our third idea of his immensity and omnipresence. God is present with all, because he directs all.

Doth he call the creatures into existence? it is to manifest his perfections. It is to have subjects on whom he may shower his favors; it is, as it were, to go out of himself, and to form through the whole universe a concert resounding the Creator's existence and glory. *For the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and godhead, are understood by the things that are made,* Rom. i. 20. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard,* Psal. xix. 1, 2, 3.

Doth he preserve his creatures? it is to answer his own designs, the depth of which no finite mind can fathom; but designs which we shall one day know, and admire his wisdom when we know them, as we adore it now, though we know them not.

Doth he send plagues, wars, famines? it is to make those feel his justice who have abused his goodness; it is to avenge the violation of his law, the contempt of his gospel, the forgetting and forsaking of the interest of his church.

Doth he afford us prosperity? it is to draw us with the bands of love, Hos. xi. 4; it is to reveal himself to us by that love which is his essence; it is to engage us to imitate him, who *never leaves himself without witness in doing good,* Acts xiv. 17.

Doth he impart knowledge to us? it is to discover the snares that surround us, the miseries that threaten us, the origin from which we sprang, the course of life we should follow, and the end at which we should aim.

Doth he communicate virtues? it is to animate us in our race; it is to convince us that there is a mighty arm to raise us from the abyss into which our natural cor-

ruption hath plunged us; it is that we may *work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that God worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure*, Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Doth he send us error? it is to make us respect that truth which we have resisted.

Doth he abandon us to our vices? it is to punish us for some other vices which we have committed voluntarily and freely; so that, if we comprehend it, his love for holiness never appears more clearly than when he abandons men to vice in this manner.

Doth he raise up kings? it is always to oblige them to administer justice, to protect the widow and the orphan, to maintain order and religion. Yet, he often permits them to violate equity, to oppress their people, and to become the scourges of his anger. By them he frequently teaches us how little account he makes of human grandeurs, seeing he bestows them sometimes upon unworthy men, upon men allured by voluptuousness, governed by ambition, and dazzled with their own glory; upon men who ridicule piety, sell their consciences, negotiate faith and religion, sacrificing the souls of their children to the infamous passions that govern themselves.

Doth he prolong our life? it is because he is *long suffering to us*, 2 Pet. iii. 9; it is because he opens in our favor *the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, to lead us to repentance*, Rom. ii. 4.

Doth he call us to die? it is to open those eternal books in which our actions are registered; it is to gather our souls into his bosom, *to bind them up in the bundle of life*, 1 Sam xxv. 29; to mix them with the ransomed armies of all *nations, tongues, and people*, Rev. vii. 9.

Such are our ideas of the omnipresence of God. Thus God seeth all, influenceth all, directeth all. In this sense we are to understand this magnificent language of Scripture: *Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee*, 1 Kings viii. 27. *Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool*, Isa. lxvi. 1. *Where is the house that ye build unto me? do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? am I God at hand, and not God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?* Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. SAURIN.

Practical Reflections on the preceding.

THIS attribute of God removes the greatest stumbling-blocks that sceptics and infidels pretend to meet with in religion. It justifies all those dark mysteries which are above the comprehension of our feeble reason. We would not make use of this reflection to open a way for human fancies, and to authorise every thing that is presented to us under the idea of the marvellous. All doctrines that are incomprehensible are not divine, nor ought we to embrace any opinion merely because it is beyond our knowledge. But when a religion, in other respects, hath good guarantees; when we have good arguments to prove that such a revelation comes from heaven; when we certainly know that it is God who speaks; ought we to be surprised, if ideas of God, which come so fully authenticated, absorb and confound us? I freely grant that, had I consulted my own reason only, I could not have discovered some mysteries of the gospel. Nevertheless, when I think on the immensity of God; when I cast my eyes on that vast ocean; when I consider that immense all; nothing astonishes me; nothing stumbles me; nothing seems to me inadmissible, how incomprehensible soever it may be. When the subject is divine, I am ready to believe all, to admit all, to receive all; provided I be convinced that it is God himself who speaks to me, or any one on his part. After this I am no more astonished that there are three distinct persons in one divine essence; one God, and yet a Father, a Son, and a Holy Ghost. After this, I am no more astonished that God foresees all without forcing any; permits sin without forcing the sinner; ordains free and intelligent creatures to such and such ends, yet without destroying their intelligence, or their liberty. After this, I am no more astonished, that the justice of God required a satisfaction proportional to his greatness, that his own love hath provided that satisfaction, and that God, from the abundance of his compassion, designed the mystery of an incarnate God; a mystery which angels admire while sceptics oppose; a mystery which absorbs human reason, but which fills all heaven with songs of praise; a mystery which is the *great mystery*, by excellence, 1 Tim. iii. 16; but the great-

ness of which nothing should make us reject, since religion proposeth it as the grand effort of the wisdom of the incomprehensible God, and commandeth us to receive it on the testimony of the incomprehensible God himself. Either religion must tell us nothing about God, or what it tells us must be beyond our capacities, and, in discovering even the borders of this immense ocean, it must needs exhibit a vast extent in which our feeble eyes are lost. But what surprises me, what stumbles me, what frightens me, is to see a diminutive creature, a contemptible man, a little ray of light glimmering through a few feeble organs, controvert a point with the Supreme Being, oppose that intelligence who sitteth at the helm of the world; question what he affirms; dispute what he determines; appeal from his decisions; and, even after God hath given evidence, reject all doctrines that are beyond his capacity. Enter into thy nothingness, mortal creature. What madness animates thee? How darest thou pretend—thou who art but a point—thou whose essence is but an atom, to measure thyself with the Supreme Being; with him who fills heaven and earth; with him whom *heaven, the heaven of heavens cannot contain?* 1 Kings viii. 27. *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? High as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know?* Job xi. 7, 8. *He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; the pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?* xxvi. 7-11. 14. *Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if thou hast understanding,* ch. xxviii. 3, 4. *Who hath laid the measures thereof? who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Who shut up the sea with doors, when I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it? when I brake up for it my decreed*

place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? ch. xxxviii. 5, 6, 7, &c. *He that reproveth God let him answer it,* ch. xl. 2. *O Lord, such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high; I cannot attain unto it!* . . .

If such be the grandeur of the God I adore, miserable wretch! what ought my repentance to be! I, a contemptible worm; I, a creature whom God could tread beneath his feet, and crush into dust by a single act of his will, I have rebelled against the great God; I have endeavoured to *provoke him to jealousy*, as if I had been *stronger than he*, 1 Cor. x. 22. I have insulted that Majesty which the angels of heaven adore; I have attacked God, with madness and boldness, on his throne, and in his empire. Is it possible to feel remorse too cutting for sins which the majesty of the offended, and the littleness of the offender, make so very atrocious?

If such be the grandeur of God, what should our humility be! Grandees of the world, mortal divinities, who swell with vanity in the presence of God, oppose yourselves to the immense God. Behold his eternal ideas, his infinite knowledge, his general influence, his universal direction; enter his immense ocean of perfections and virtues, what are ye? a grain of dust, a point, an atom, a nothing.

If such be the grandeur of God, what ought our confidence to be! *If God be for us, who can be against us?* Rom. viii. 31. Poor creature! tossed about the world, as by so many winds, by hunger, by sickness, by persecution, by misery, by nakedness, by exile; fear not in a vessel of which God himself is the pilot...

But above all, if such be the grandeur of God, if God be every where present, what should our vigilance be! and, to return to the idea with which we began, what impression should this thought make on reasonable souls! *God seeth me. When thou wast under the fig-tree*, said Jesus Christ to Nathanael, *I saw thee*, John i. 48. See Eccles. iii. 23, 24, 25. We do not know what Jesus Christ saw under the fig-tree, nor is it necessary now to inquire: but it was certainly something which, Nathanael was fully persuaded, no mortal eye had seen. As soon, therefore, as

Jesus Christ had uttered these words, he believed, and said, *Rabbi, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.* My brethren, God useth the same language to each of you to-day: *when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee.*

Thou hypocrite! when wrapped in a veil of religion, embellished with exterior piety, thou concealedst an impious heart, and didst endeavour to impose on God and man, I saw thee. I penetrated all those labyrinths, I dissipated all those darknesses, I dived into all thy deep designs.

Thou worldling! who, with a prudence truly infernal, hast the art of giving a beautiful tint to the most odious objects; who appearest not to hate thy neighbour, because thou dost not openly attack him; not to falsify thy promise, because thou hast the art of eluding it; not to oppress thy dependents, because thou knowest how to impose silence on them: I saw thee, when thou gavest those secret stabs, when thou didst receive those bribes, and didst accumulate those wages of unrighteousness, which cry for vengeance against thee.

Thou slave to sensuality! ashamed of thine excesses before the face of the sun, I saw thee, when, with bars and bolts, with obscurity and darkness, and complicated precautions, thou didst hide thyself from the eyes of men, *defile the temple of God, and make the members of Christ the members of a harlot*, 1 Cor. vi. 15.

My brethren, the discourses, which we usually preach to you, absorb your minds in a multitude of ideas. A collection of moral ideas perhaps confound instead of instructing you, and when we attempt to engage you in too many reflections, you enter really into none. Behold an epitome of religion! Behold a morality in three words! Return to your houses, and every where carry this reflection with you, *God seeth me! God seeth me!* SAURIN.

The Providence of God.

THAT God is, implies not only that he is eternal and self-existent, but also that he is to all other beings the spring and fountain of what they are and what they have, and consequently that he is the wise and powerful Creator of angels and men, and even of the whole universe. This is the first particular, that God is. The second, that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, ascertains the providence

and government of God, exemplified in its most eminent effect with regard to mankind; for providence extends further than this, and comprehends in it a constant preservation and support of all things visible and invisible, whether in heaven or earth, and the sovereign government and disposal of them. Mechanics, when they have completed houses, ships, and other works they have been engaged in, leave them to take their fate in the world, and, for the most part, give themselves no further trouble about the accidents that may befall them; but the Supreme Architect and wise Creator never forsakes the work of his hands, but keeps his arms continually about it to preserve it; sits at the helm to rule and govern it; is himself in every part of it, and fills the whole with his presence. So great a fabric could not possibly stand without some guardian and ruler; nor can this be any other than the Creator himself; for who can pay a greater regard to it, support it more effectually, or govern it with greater wisdom, than he who made it? 'Nothing can be more perfect than God; therefore it is necessary the world should be governed by him,' says Cicero; and, 'They who take away providence, though they acknowledge God in words, in fact deny him.' . . .

In maintaining the doctrine of Providence, we affirm, first, that the eternal mind has an absolute and perfect knowledge of all things in general, and every single one in particular. Nor does he see only those that are actually present, as they appear in their order upon the stage of the world, but, at one view, comprehends all that are past, as well as all that are to come, as if they were actually present before him. . . . And here, were any one to reflect seriously on the vast number of affairs that are constantly in agitation in one province or even in one city, the many political schemes and projects, the multiplicity of law matters, the still greater number of family affairs, and all the particulars comprehended under so many general heads, he would be amazed and overpowered with the thoughts of a knowledge so incomprehensibly extensive. This was the very thought which excited the divine psalmist's admiration, and made him cry out with wonder and astonishment, *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high; I cannot attain unto it.*

He not only knows all things and takes

notice of them, but he also rules and governs them. *He hath done whatsoever he pleased in the heavens and the earth*, says the psalmist. *He worketh all things*, says the apostle, *according to the counsel of his own will*. He does all things according to his pleasure, but that pleasure is influenced by his reason; all things absolutely, but yet all things with the greatest justice, sanctity, and prudence.

He views and governs the actions of man in a particular manner. He hath given him a law. He hath proposed rewards and annexed punishments to enforce it, and engage man's obedience. And having discovered, as it were, an extraordinary concern about him when he made him, as we have observed upon the words *Let us make man*, in like manner he still continues to maintain an uncommon good-will towards him, and, so to speak, an anxious concern about him; so that one of the ancients most justly called man 'God's favorite creature.' . . . The great difficulty upon this subject which perplexes men fond of controversy, and is perplexed by them, is, how to reconcile human liberty with divine providence, which we have taken notice of before. But to both these difficulties, and to all others that may occur upon the subject, I would oppose the saying of St. Augustine, 'Let us grant that God can do some things which we cannot understand.'

What a melancholy thing would it be to live in a world where anarchy reigned! It would certainly be a woful situation to all, but more especially to the best and most inoffensive part of mankind. It would have been no great privilege to have been born into a world without God and without providence; for, if there were no Supreme Ruler of the world, then undoubtedly the wickedness of men would reign without any curb or impediment, and the great and powerful would unavoidably devour the weak and helpless, 'as the great fishes often eat up the small, and the hawk makes havoc among the weaker birds.'

It may be objected, that this frequently happens even in the present world, as appears from the prophecies of Habakkuk, i. 15; but the prophet immediately after asserts, that there is a supreme Power which holds the reins in the midst of these irregularities; and though they are sometimes permitted, yet there is a determinate time appointed for setting all things to rights

again, which the just man expects, and, till it comes, lives by faith.

ABP. LEIGHTON.

The deliverances and successes of the people of Israel came not from themselves or their own efforts, but from God and his goodness. If their tyrannical oppressor in Egypt was forced to give them liberty, it was not because Israel took arms to break their yoke, raised troops, engaged in battles, undertook sieges, blocked up Pharaoh in his capital, or stormed him in his palace; but God alone fought for their release, and, arming his angels with the sword of vengeance, by their invisible hands slew all the first-born of the land for the deliverance of his people. Afterwards, if we see them cross the Red Sea, it was not that they equipped a fleet, built ships, collected pilots and expert mariners, and employed sails and rudders; but that God, by a wonderful favor, clave the gulf before them, and made for them a dry way through the waters. If their multitudes in the barren desert were fed without difficulty, the reason is, not that they labored the ground, sowed grain, planted trees, and reaped harvests either of corn or nourishing fruits, but that God himself prepared their bread, and rained it down every morning from heaven before the doors of their tents. If those who were bitten by fiery serpents recovered from the venomous wounds, it was the consequence neither of medicinal remedies nor of the virtue of herbs, nor of mineral preparations, nor of chemical compounds, nor of antidotes, but of God himself becoming their Physician, and miraculously curing them by the sight of a brazen serpent erected before their eyes. If they succeeded in crossing the Jordan, it was not by raising bridges over that river, seeking fordable places, attempting to swim over, or reaching the opposite bank by means of oars; but because God, present among their host in the ark, the symbol of His Majesty, arrested the waters in the midst of the channel, drove them backwards to their source, and thus left a free passage. Or again, if Israel became masters of Jericho, which opposed their establishment and conquests, it was not gained by assaults, trenches, warlike machines, battering rams, or minings, and the military forces of the tribes; but because the God of battles overturned by his mighty arm the walls of the insolent city; and this not

by the sword of soldiers, or the valour of captains, but simply by the breath of his priests.

What means this remarkable and mysterious conduct of God, if not that the success of Israel is not to be ascribed to their power and exploits, nor their subsistence to their industry, nor their victories to their conduct in battle; but that the whole glory belongs to the grace of God alone.

And as the deliverance of Israel was an express figure of the church's salvation, God thereby raised us to the knowledge of a nobler mystery; namely, that the salvation of men comes not from themselves, is not acquired by their own strength, depends not on their works, is not gained by the merit of their labors or virtues; but that it must be ascribed entirely to the grace of the Lord, who bestows it on us by the pure effect of his pity and goodness.

Du Bosc.

If ever pains were taken by the Almighty deeply to express any truth upon the mind of man, it was that of entire dependence upon himself, as the Author and Giver of all good. This he labored to inculcate upon the minds of the Israelites by the whole course of his proceedings. They were brought out of Egypt, not of their own motion or choice, but by his special call. He had provided a country for them, and he charged himself with conducting them into it. Pharaoh resisted them; difficulties were multiplied to oppose them; but every difficulty served only to enhance the greatness of the power which overcame it, and to point out more manifestly the hand of the Most High. The sea opened a passage for them, and swallowed up their pursuers: the strong rock in the desert poured out for them copious streams of water, which followed them in their course: a cloud miraculously shaded them from the intense heat by day, and a pillar of fire gave them light by night: manna fell around them, in sufficient quantity to support them all abundantly: their clothes waxed not old upon them, nor did their feet swell: quails came daily, and fell around their camp in such abundance as amply to supply all their wants. Were they bitten by serpents, they were miraculously healed by only looking to one of brass. Did they want to pass over into the country which God had given them, the waters of Jordan flowed back, and

left them a dry passage through its channel. And the walls of their enemies' cities fell down at their approach.—Could any facts indicate in a more striking manner the presence and the agency of the Almighty God? This was the very knowledge he intended to inculcate. He wished them to be thoroughly convinced—to be practically convinced, I mean (for there is a great difference between acknowledging the presence and agency of God with the understanding, and acknowledging them with the heart)—of the continual presence, constant superintendence, never-ceasing agency of that great and glorious Being who made us, and in whom we live and move and have our being.

More important knowledge than this of the providence of God cannot be learned by men. While we thus practically know the power and presence of God, we shall feel the dispositions which that knowledge ought to inspire; we shall watch over our conduct with a filial dread of offending him; we shall place an unbounded confidence in his wisdom to direct, his power to strengthen, his providence to defend, his goodness to bless us; we shall cease to have any will of our own, and become anxious only that his will should be done; we shall submit to him with perfect resignation, and endeavour in all things to obey his commands. This was the great end and aim of all the discipline with which God visited the Israelites in the wilderness: *Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways and to fear him.*

VENN.

Providence of God in restraining the Passions of men.

Which stilleth the noise of the sea, and tumult of the people (Psal. lxxv. 7). Tumults of the people could no more be stilled by the force of a man, than the waves of the sea by a puff of breath. How strangely did God qualify the hearts of the Egyptians willingly to submit to the sale of their land, when they might have risen in a tumult, broke open the granaries, and supplied their wants. (Gen. xlvii. 19. 21.) Indeed, if the world were left to the conduct of chance or fortune, what work would the savage lusts and passions of men make among us! How is it possible that any but an Almighty power can temper so many jarring principles, and rank so many quarrelsome and turbulent spirits

in a due order? If those brutish passions which boil in the hearts of men were let loose by that Infinite Power that bridles them, how soon would the world be run headlong into inconceivable confusions, and be rent in pieces by its own disorders!

REV. S. CHARNOCK.

Providence of God in overruling all Com-motions to the interests of the church.

THERE is the eye of God, that eye which runs to and fro throughout the whole earth in the wheels of worldly motions, even in the most dreadful providences in the world, that stare upon men with a grim countenance: *their rings were dreadful, and their rings were full of eyes* (Ezek. i. 18). All the overturnings in the world are subservient to the church's interest, though they are not visibly so, unless diligently attended. God orders the confusions of the world, and is in the midst of the tumults of the people. *The Lord sits upon the flood, yea, the Lord sits King for ever; the Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace* (Ps. xxix. 10, 11). He sits upon the flood as a charioteer in his chariot, guiding it with holy and merciful intentions to his people, to give them both strength and peace in the midst of them, and as the issue of them. By water and floods is frequently meant tumults and confusions in the world. If it were not so, why would our Saviour encourage his disciples and all their successors in the same profession, to lift up their heads when they hear of wars, if their redemption (Luke xxi. 25-28) were not designed by God in them? They are all testimonies of the nearer approaches of Christ in power and glory to judge the earth, and glorify his people. God's great end in the shaking of nations, is the performing those gracious promises to his church which yet remain unaccomplished. These earthquakes in the world will bring heaven to the church. The great revolutions in the eastern part of the world, the ruin of the Babylonian empire, the erecting the Persian, and all the means whereby it was brought about, God ordered, God foretold, God directed for Jacob's service. Cyrus, led by ambition, levies an army against Babylon; yet, though he was a ravenous bird, he was to execute the counsel of God, *calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel* (Isa. xli. 11), to be

an instrument for the delivery of the captived Jews, and the restorer of the ruined temple. He had called him out by name to make a great revolution in the world. He foretold by his prophet Isaiah, many years before, the means he should use in the siege of Babylon to attain the victory, the very dividing Euphrates, which was the great confidence of the Babylonians, *that say to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up the rivers* (Isa. xlv. 27); whereby it was as it were dried up for them to pass over; the very opening of the gates, *and the gates shall not be shut* (Isa. xlv. 1); the Babylonians in a presumptuous security had left them open, thinking it impossible the city could be taken, because of the river Euphrates; *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight*; and what was the end of that great revolution and motion in that part of the world? See Isa. xlv. 4, *For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name*. This prophecy was when Jerusalem and the temple were standing. God casts about long before his people needs, for their welfare in the great revolutions and changes of the world; *that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built, and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid* (Isa. xlv. 28). Cyrus had no knowledge of this end of God; *though thou hast not known me* (Isa. xlv. 4, 5), twice repeated. Cyrus did not know God, neither did he know God's end; he acts his own purposes, and is acted by God to higher purposes than he understood. In all the siftings of nations, and sifting the church among the nations, as corn is sifted in a sieve, God designs not the destruction of his people, but the cleansing them, the separating the flour from the bran. REV. S. CHARNOCK.

The Providence of God to be judged by the ultimate end.

'Fix not your eye only upon the sensible operations of Providence, but the ultimate end.' . . . Had any of us been with Christ, and acknowledged him the Saviour of the world, and yet seen him crucified in such a manner by men, and judged only by that; what wise and what just construction should we have made of that Providence? Much the same as some of his disciples did: *We trusted that it*

had been he which should have redeemed Israel, Luke xxiv. 21. But the whole design is spoiled; we were fools, and he an impostor. Yet this, which seemed to be the ruin of redemption, was the necessary highway to it by God's constitution. No other way was it to be procured: *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory?* Ver. 26. His entrance into glory to perfect our salvation was the end of the sensible suffering, wherein he laid the foundation. As they charge Christ with imposture, not considering the end, so do we God with unrighteousness when we consider not his aim. The end both beautifies and crowns the work; the remarks of God's glory in the creation are better drawn from the ends of the creatures and their joint subserviency to them, than from any one single piece of the creation. We must not only consider the present end, but the remote end, because God in his providence towards his church hath his end for aftertimes. God acts for ends at a great distance from us, which may not be completed till we are dead and rotten. How can we judge of that which respects a thing so remote from us, unless we view it in that relation? God's aims in former providences were things to come; his aims in present providences are things to come. As the matter of the church's prayers, so the objects of God's providences are things to come. *Ask me of things to come, concerning my sons*, Isa. xlv. 11. The matter of their prayers then were, that God would order all things for the coming of the Messiah. The matter of the church's prayer now is, that God would order all things for the perfecting the Messiah in his mystical body. The whole frame of Providence is for one entire design. It is one entire book with seven seals, Rev. v. 1. The beginning of a book, as well as the middle, hath relation to the end. The design of God's book of providence is but one in all the seven seals and periods of time.

'Consider not only one single act of Providence, but the whole scheme, to make a conclusion.' The motions of his eyes are various, but all end in discoveries of his strength. Men do not argue from one single proposition, but draw the conclusion from several propositions knit together. It is by such a spiritual logic we are to make our conclusions from the ways of

Providence. As in the reading Scripture, if we take not the whole period, we may make not only nonsense, but blasphemy, as in that of the psalmist, *Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in unrighteousness*. If a man should read only *Thou art not a God*, and make a full stop there, it would be blasphemy; but reading the whole verse, it is excellent sense, and an honorable declaration of God's holiness. Such errors will be committed in reading the books of Providence if we fix our eyes only in one place, and make a full stop where God hath not made any. We judge not of a picture by the first draught, but the last lines; not by one shadow or colour, but by the whole composure. The wisdom of God is best judged of by the view of the harmony of Providence. The single threads of Providence may seem very weak, or knotty and uneven, and seem to administer just occasion of censure; but will it not as much raise the admiration to see them all woven into a curious piece of branched work? Consider therefore God's ways of working; but fully judge nothing till the conclusion, for that is to judge before the time. Judge not then of Providence at the first appearance, God may so lose the glory of his work, and you the comfort. CHARNOCK.

The Glory of God in Creation.

How great and glorious a character of God is presented to us by these perfections:

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever he had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, he is God! Possessed of perfect excellence, contemplating with infinite complacency his glorious attributes, and containing in himself a boundless sufficiency for the accomplishment of every thing great and desirable, he saw that it was becoming his character to unfold his perfections, and communicate his goodness, to an endless and innumerable race of beings. From an infinite height, he took a survey of the immeasurable vast of possible beings; and in an expansion without limits, but desolate and wild, where nothing was, called into existence with a word the countless multitude of worlds, with all their various furniture. With his own hand he lighted up at once innumerable suns, and rolled around them innumerable worlds. All these he so dis-

persed and arranged, as that all received light, and warmth, and life, and comfort; and all at the same time he stored and adorned with a rich and unceasing variety of beauty and magnificence, and with the most suitable means of virtue and happiness. Throughout his vast empire, he surrounded his throne with intelligent creatures, to fill the immense and perfect scheme of being, which originally existed with infinite splendour in his own incomprehensible mind. Independent of all possible beings and events, he sits at the head of this universe, unchanged, and incapable of change, amid all the successions, tossings, and tumults, by which it is agitated. . . . Nothing can happen, nothing can be done, beyond his expectation, or without his permission. Nothing can frustrate his designs, and nothing disappoint or vary his purposes. All things, beside him, change, and fluctuate without ceasing. Events exist, and vanish. Beings rise, and expire. But his own existence, the thoughts which he entertains, the desires which he admits, the purposes which he forms, are *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. Throughout the coming vast of eternity also, and the boundless tracts of immensity, he sees with serene complacency his own perfect purposes daily and invariably advancing, with a regular fulfilment towards their absolute completion. In its own place, in its own time, and in its own manner, each exists in exact obedience to his order, and in exact accordance with his choice. Nothing lingers, nothing hastens: but his counsel exactly stands, and all his pleasure will be precisely accomplished. . . .

What a power must that be, which at one and the same moment works in every vegetable and animal system in this great world; which upholds, quickens, and invigorates every mind; which at the same moment also, acts in the same efficacious manner in every part of the solar system, and of all the other systems which compose the universe! What must be the power of him who sends abroad every moment immense oceans of light from the sun, and innumerable such oceans from the stars; who 'holds' all worlds in the 'hollow of his hand,' retains them exactly in their places, and rolls them through the fields of ether with unceasing, most rapid, and at the same time perfectly harmonious

motions; and who, thus accomplishing every purpose for which they were made, prevents the least disturbance, error or imperfection! . . .

These mighty exertions have been already made through many thousand years: still they are perfectly made. They are made without intermission, rest, or relaxation. From century to century the energy operates night and day, and operates now with the same force and effect as at the beginning. Every where it is seen, and is seen every where to be the same. It is therefore wholly unspent, and plainly incapable of being spent or diminished.

In this wonderful fact is exhibited unanswerable proof of that sublime declaration of the prophet: *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the Everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?*

DR. DWIGHT.

Reflections on the Works of God.

Look! are not the fields covered with a delightful verdure? Is there not something in the woods and groves, in the rivers and clear springs, that soothes, that delights, that transports the soul? At the prospect of the wide and deep ocean, or some huge mountain whose top is lost in the clouds, or of an old gloomy forest, are not our minds filled with a pleasing horror? Even in rocks and deserts, is there not an agreeable wildness? How sincere a pleasure is it to behold the natural beauties of the earth! To preserve and renew our relish for them, is not the veil of night alternately drawn over her face, and doth she not change her dress with the seasons? How aptly are the elements disposed! What variety and use in the meanest productions of nature! What delicacy, what beauty, what contrivance, in animal and vegetable bodies! How exquisitely are all things suited, as well to their particular ends, as to constitute opposite parts of the whole! And while they mutually aid and support, do they not also set off and illustrate each other? Raise now your thoughts from this ball of earth, to all those glorious luminaries that adorn the high arch of heaven. The motion and situation of the planets, are they not admirable for use and order? Were those (miscalled *erratic*) globes ever known to stray, in their repeated journeys through

the pathless void? Do they not measure areas round the sun ever proportioned to the times? So fixed, so immutable, are the laws by which the unseen Author of nature actuates the universe. How vivid and radiant is the lustre of the fixed stars! How magnificent and rich that negligent profusion, with which they appear to be scattered throughout the whole azure vault! Yet if you take the telescope, it brings into your sight a new host of stars that escape the naked eye. Here they seem contiguous and minute, but to a nearer view immense orbs of light at various distances, far sunk in the abyss of space. Now you must call imagination to your aid. The feeble narrow sense cannot descry innumerable worlds revolving round the central fires; and in those worlds the energy of an all-perfect mind displayed in endless forms. But neither sense nor imagination are big enough to comprehend the boundless extent with all its glittering furniture. Though the laboring mind exert and strain each power to its utmost reach, there still stands out ungrasped a surplusage immeasurable. Yet all the vast bodies that compose this mighty frame, how distant and remote soever, are by some secret mechanism, some divine art and force linked in a mutual dependence and intercourse with each other, even with this earth, which was almost slipped from my thoughts, and lost in the crowd of worlds. Is not the whole system immense, beautiful, glorious beyond expression and beyond thought? **BR. BERKELEY.**

The Christian's Views of the Works of God compared with those of the Atheist.

I SHALL consider the views which the atheist forms of the Natural World.

In this consideration I am disposed to allow the atheist all the advantages which he can derive from endowments or acquisitions. He may with my consent be what I well know he can be, a chemist, a botanist, a mineralogist, or an anatomist. He shall, if he pleases, be a mathematician, a natural philosopher, an astronomer, a metaphysician, or a poet. I mean that he may be any or all of these, so far as one man, of his opinions, can be reasonably supposed to sustain the several characters specified. I will not even avail myself of the celebrated remark of Lord Bacon, 'that a little philosophy will make a man

an atheist, but a great deal will make him a Christian;' although I entertain not a doubt of its truth. My business is not to dwell on minute things, but to show the nature of those which are of higher importance.

The atheist, then, may with enlarged understanding and skill contemplate the structure of the heavenly bodies. He may, with the eye of a naturalist, explore the organisation of the vegetable kingdom; may analyse the chemical principles and combinations of plants and minerals; and may trace, to use his own language, the hidden walks of Nature, in her mysterious progress through the system. Or with the imagination of the poet, and the science of the astronomer, he may be fascinated with the beauty, splendour, and sublimity of the landscape, or delighted with the distances, magnitudes, motions, harmony, and magnificence of the planetary and stellar systems; still his views of all these, and all other natural objects, although in his mind the most illustrious objects which exist will be poor and pitiable.

All of them, in his opinion, owe their being to fate, accident, or the blind action of stupid matter. They exist for no end, and accomplish none. They spring from no wisdom, and display none. They are therefore what they would have been, had they been made and moved by an intelligent cause, without any purpose or design in their creation, a vast apparatus of splendour and magnificence assembled together for nothing; an immense show, in which nothing was intended, and from which nothing can be gained. The mind, in surveying them, asks instinctively and irresistibly, how came this train of wonders into being? and is answered with nothing but perplexity and folly, but doubt and despair. In the same manner it inquires, of what use will this mighty assemblage of worlds and their furniture prove? The only reply is, of none. All, with all their motions, furniture, and inhabitants, are the result, and under the control, of that iron-handed necessity which exists in the blind operations of unconscious matter; that gloomy fate of the heathens, to which they sullenly submitted because they deemed it inevitable; and which, while it showered calamities in abundance, cut off every hope and every effort of the attainment of deliverance. To the wretch

whose mind is effectually imbued with this scheme of things, the universe is changed into a vast prison, where himself and his companions are confined by bolts and bars, forged by the hand of blind, immovable, and irresistible destiny; where no heart is found to pity their sufferings, and no hand to lend relief; where no eye looks with sympathy, and no ear listens with tenderness; where the walls reach to heaven, and are hung with clouds and midnight; and where every effort to escape conducts the miserable tenants only to the sullen cavern of despair.

Should the atheist, sick with the forlorn and hopeless contemplation, turn his eye from this scheme of things to his only alternative, the doctrine of chance, he will find himself equally distant from refreshment and from hope. Here, himself and all other beings in earth, sea, and sky, with all their properties and operations, are mere accidents, involved and perplexed in their movements, like the particles of dust in a whirlwind. In his view, if he understand his system, and will think consistently with himself, his thoughts, volitions, and efforts, the continuance of his own being, and that of all other things, are mere casualties, produced by no cause, upheld by no support, directed by no wisdom, and existing to no purpose. Mere abortions, precarious in the extreme, possessed only of a doubtful and fluctuating existence, they tremble and flutter in a dreadful state of suspense over the gloomy abyss of annihilation. All here is doubt and discouragement. Not a plan can be rationally formed, not a hope consistently indulged. Where every thing is to happen, if it exist at all; or where the result of the casualty is, with the same probability, seen to be any thing or nothing; it is plain that nothing can be expected. Against every expectation, the chances are millions of millions to one; for every supposable thing is as likely to exist as any other.

Should it be said, that the atheist refutes these declarations by his conduct, because he lives and acts like other men, and is no more influenced than others by a regard either to fate or chance, I answer, that the objection is erroneous. The atheist, instead of refuting these observations, refutes himself. He denies his own principles, and avails himself of the principles which he opposes. If he under-

stands his own scheme, he cannot but know that the necessity of existence, which he professes to believe, is irreconcilable with all freedom of mind, with all voluntariness, with all contrivance. He knows that connexion cannot spring from chance; that order cannot arise out of accident; that whatever exists fortuitously exists independently of all things else, and can never be connected with any other thing, by any moral or useful relation. If therefore he would think and act rationally, he would neither contrive, expect, fear, nor hope; neither build nor plant; neither reap nor gather; but would yield himself up to the control of irresistible destiny, or to the capricious disposal of contingency.

The works of God are in their own nature beautiful, magnificent, sublime, and wonderful; and by every eye which sees them their nature must in some degree be discerned. It is readily admitted, therefore, that the atheist himself, if he be not a sot, must in some degree perceive the sublimity and splendour which are inherent in the earth and the heavens. But from these illustrious attributes he subtracts immensely, when he denies that they owe their origin to an intelligent and eternal Mind; when he denies that they are moved and ruled by infinite perfection; and that by the same perfection they are conducted to a divine and glorious end, a purpose infinitely excellent and desirable. Without this consideration, all their lustre becomes feeble and fading; a dim taper, gradually declining on the sight towards a final extinction. At the same time, by attributing their existence to fate, chance, or matter, he contracts their greatness, and lowers their elevation to a measure equally humble and painful; and covers even the bright lights of heaven with a shroud of gloom and obscurity.

When the Christian beholds the earth and the heavens, how different are his views of the same illustrious objects? To him the vast congregation of worlds is the immense and eternal empire of the self-existent and omnipresent Jehovah, contrived by his boundless wisdom, chosen by his boundless goodness, and executed by his boundless power. This single thought, like the rising of the sun upon this benighted world, imparts to the universe, in a moment, a diffusive and illi-

mitable splendour, investing, explaining, and adorning all the beings of which it is composed. On all, the sublime impression of design is instamped as a living image, glowing in living colours. The universe becomes a vast assemblage of means, directed to an immortal purpose; arranged in perfect order, adjusted with exact symmetry, and operating with complete harmony: and all, from the glory of that purpose, and the perfection of their arrangement, symmetry, and operations, derive an elevation and grandeur, of which they are otherwise utterly incapable.

God, before whom all things are as nothing, is invested, by his perfections, with a greatness and sublimity, in comparison with which, all other magnificence, separately considered, becomes *less than nothing and vanity*. Eternal, omnipresent, and immutable power, wisdom, and goodness, are objects so high, so vast, that all the worlds and suns which they have created diminish, when compared with them, to *the drop of the bucket, and the small dust of the balance*. But in the view of the Christian, these worlds, and every thing which they contain, derive a glorious lustre, from being an immediate exhibition of these attributes, and of the incomprehensible Being in whom they reside. Wherever the Christian casts his eyes, he sees all things full of God. The omnipresent, all-creating, and all-ruling Jehovah lives, and moves, and acts, in every thing which meets his view. In the spring, he comes forth in his beauty and beneficence, clothes the naked world in the richest attire, and awakens universal life and joy. In the summer and the autumn, *he openeth his bountiful hand, and satisfieth the wants of every living thing*. In the winter, *he hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet*. The heavens recall to the mind of the Christian the day when God said, *Let there be a firmament; and there was a firmament*: in the sun, still resounds that voice which commanded, *Let there be light, and there was light*.

In the mean time, all things borne on, in the view of the atheist, in a blind and relentless career by irresistible necessity, or dancing in fortuitous and endless mazes, like the imaginary atoms supposed by him to have produced them, and therefore

dark, cheerless, and hopeless, are, in that of the Christian, directed by the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator; and are therefore to him full of expectation, hope, and comfort. Wherever he is, there God is. His ear is always open to his prayers; his eye, to his dangers, sorrows and fears; his hand, extended to supply, to relieve, to comfort, and to save. An Almighty Friend is every where found by him, in the crowd and in solitude, by night and by day; never absent, never forgetful, never unkind, never incumbered by any concerns which will prevent his wants from being regarded, nor surrounded by any difficulties which can hinder them from being supplied. Between this friend and him time and place can never intervene: he is every where, and is every where to him a God. DR. DWIGHT.

Regard of God for Holiness.

LET us not think holiness in the hearts of men here in the world is a forlorn, forsaken and outcast thing from God, that he hath no regard of. Holiness, wherever it is, though never so small, if it be but hearty and sincere, it can no more be cut off and discontinued from God, than a sunbeam here upon earth can be broken off from its intercourse with the sun, and be left alone amidst the mire and dirt of this world. The sun may as well discard its own rays, and banish them from itself into some region of darkness far remote from it, where they shall have no dependence at all upon it, as God can forsake and abandon holiness in the world, and leave it a poor orphan thing, that shall have no influence at all from him to preserve and keep it. Holiness is something of God, wherever it is; it is an efflux from him, that always hangs upon him, and lives in him: as the sunbeams, although they gild this lower world, and spread their golden wings over us, yet they are not so much here, where they shine, as in the sun, from whence they flow. God cannot draw a curtain betwixt himself and holiness, which is nothing but the splendour and shining of himself: he cannot hide his face from it; he cannot desert it in the world. He that is once *born of God shall overcome the world*, and the prince of this world too, by the power of God in him. Holiness is no solitary neglected thing; it hath stronger confederacies, greater alli-

ances, than sin and wickedness. It is in league with God and the universe: the whole creation smiles upon it: there is something of God in it, and therefore it must needs be a victorious and triumphant thing.

Wickedness is a weak, cowardly, and guilty thing, a fearful and trembling shadow. It is the child of ignorance and darkness; it is afraid of light, and cannot possibly withstand the power of it, nor endure the sight of its glittering armour. It is allied to none but wretched, forlorn and apostate spirits, that do what they can to support their own weak and tottering kingdom of darkness, but are only strong in weakness and impotency. The whole polity and commonwealth of devils is not so powerful as one *child of light*, one *babe in Christ*: they are not able to *quench* the least *smoking flax*, to extinguish one spark of grace. Darkness is not able to make resistance against light, but ever, as it comes, flies before it. But if wickedness invite the society of devils to it, (as we learn by the sad experience of these present times, in many examples of those that were possessed with malice, revengefulness, and lust,) so that those cursed fiends do most readily apply themselves to it, and offer their service to feed it, and encourage it, because it is their own life and nature, their own *kingdom of darkness*, which they strive to enlarge and to spread the dominions of; shall we then think that holiness, which is so nearly allied unto God, hath no good genius at all in the world to attend upon it, to help it and encourage it? Shall not the *kingdom of light* be as true to its own interest, and as vigilant for the enlarging of itself, as the *kingdom of darkness*? Holiness is never alone in the world, but God is always with it, and his loving Spirit doth ever associate and join itself to it. He that sent it into the world is with it, as Christ speaketh of himself, *The Father hath not left me alone, because I do always those things that please him*. Holiness is the life of God, which he cannot but feed and maintain wheresoever it is: and as devils are always active to encourage evil; so we cannot imagine but that the heavenly host of blessed angels above are busily employed in the promoting of that which they love best, that which is dearest to God whom they serve, the life and nature of God. *There is joy in hea-*

ven at the conversion of one sinner; heaven takes notice of it; there is a choir of angels that sweetly sings the epithalamium of a soul divorced from sin and Satan, and espoused unto Christ. What therefore the wise man speaks concerning wisdom, I shall apply to holiness: *Take fast hold of Holiness; let her not go; keep her, for she is thy life: Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life*, and of death too. Let nothing be esteemed of greater consequence and concernment to thee than what thou doest and actest, how thou livest. Nothing *without us* can make us either happy or miserable; nothing can either *defile us*, or hurt us, but what *goeth out from us*, what springeth and bubbleth up out of our own hearts. We have dreadful apprehensions of the flames of hell without us; we tremble and are afraid when we hear of *fire and brimstone*; whilst in the mean time we securely nourish within our own hearts a true and living hell:

— *et cæco carpimur igni*:

the dark fire of our lusts consumeth our bowels within, and miserably scorcheth our souls, and we are not troubled at it. We do not perceive how hell steals upon us whilst we live here. And as for heaven, we only gaze abroad, expecting that it should come in to us from without, but never look for the beginnings of it to arise within, in our own hearts. CUDWORTH.

Of all the perfections of the Deity, none is more worthy of his nature, and so peculiarly admirable, as his infinite purity. It is the most shining attribute that derives a lustre to all the rest; he is *glorious in holiness*, Exod. xv. 11. Wisdom degenerates into craft, power into tyranny, mercy loses its nature, without holiness. He swears by it as his supreme excellency: *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David*, Psal. lxxxix. 35. It is the most venerable attribute, in the praise whereof the harmony of heaven agrees. The angels and saints above are represented expressing their ecstasy and ravishment at the beauty of holiness; *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory*, Isa. vi. 3. This only he loves and values in the creature, being the impression of his most divine and amiable perfection. Inferior creatures have a resemblance of

other divine attributes: the winds and thunder set forth God's power; the firmness of the rocks and the incorruptibility of the heavens are an obscure representation of his unchangeableness; but holiness, that is the most orient pearl in the crown of heaven, shines only in the reasonable creature. Upon this account man only is said to be formed after his image. And in men there are some appearances of the Deity, that do not entitle to his special love. In princes there is a shadow of his sovereignty, yet they may be the objects of his displeasure; but a likeness to God in holiness attracts his eye and heart, and infinitely endears the creature to him.

DR. BATES.

False Views regarding the Holiness of God.

THE world asserts that there are circumstances which justify sin. Strong temptation, for instance, is continually named as an extenuation of our faults. The dishonest man pleads the distress which prompted his crime as taking away its guilt. The young plead the passions of their age as diminishing the sin of indulgence. The violent and angry speak of the provocation which excited their resentment, as an excuse for their having yielded to it. The rich imagine that their plenty justifies the indolence and luxury in which they live. The poor suppose that poverty and suffering will excuse their discontent and neglect of God. Each man, in short, finds something in his own case which takes off the criminality of his sin; and each man ventures to imagine *that God is not of purer eyes than to behold the evil* which is done under such circumstances as his own. But even this is not the worst. The fence being once broken down, all manner of trespass is committed on the holiness of God. Having accustomed themselves to lose sight of the fear of God in one respect, men soon lose their fear of him in all. They begin by supposing that particular circumstances justify sin, and they end by thinking that no justification at all is wanted. They live loosely, they live profanely, they live in forgetfulness of God, and in neglect of his laws; they observe nothing except that which prudence, or fashion, or habit recommend as expedient; they live as it were without God in the world, and the language of their hearts, if not of their

mouths, is this:—*How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?* (Ps. lxxiii. 11.) In fact, we are not aware of the influence which is exercised over us in this respect, nor of the consummate art and indefatigable diligence with which the world has labored to conceal from our apprehensions the essential holiness of God. His other attributes are sometimes acknowledged as conducing to the peace of society, or are used in some perverted or distorted form for the purpose of affording consolation. The justice of God is held out as a source of terror to the lawless and the violent. The love of God is spoken of as the source of comfort. The mercy of God is named as the universal source of hope; but his holiness is never referred to, and every possible means is made use of to avoid its observation. An insurmountable jealousy appears to exist among men towards this peculiar quality; and as there is no obvious method of reconciling it with the lives they wish to lead, and the peace they desire to maintain, the utmost ingenuity of the world is exercised, and all the refinement of its art has been displayed, in endeavouring to conceal or to obscure it. To this cause we must ascribe the pains that have been taken to divest sin of all its grosser, more offensive qualities, and to present it in a form as captivating as possible to our natural feelings. To this cause we must ascribe the liberty universally granted in the world to every indulgence of the flesh, which does not materially interfere with the welfare of others, and the outcry which is raised against any peculiar watchfulness or self-restraint.

From the same cause arises that prejudice which has always prevailed in the world against pure and spiritual systems of religion, and the preference of those which consisted in forms, and included no close or sanctifying applications of truth to the conscience. In short, if we were to take at once a view of the state of society, and consider what was the object of its internal regulations, and its outward forms; if we were to estimate the effect produced by the levity of the world, as well as by the activity of the world; if we were to survey the tone of public proceedings and private conversations, we could hardly deny that the great apparent object seemed to be an endeavour to change the moral character of things, to diminish the guilt

of sin, and to lower the obligations to holiness; and in this way to undermine the authority of a law, which men have not the courage to reject, or the power to deny. For, in truth, how few are the occupations in the world which have not an obvious tendency to detract from the holiness of those that are engaged in them? How few are the amusements which do not take off from the horror with which sin ought to be regarded, and present it to the mind in some winning or ingratiating form? What is a great part of the literature, not of the heathen but of the Christian world, but a labored endeavour to recommend, or to excuse the indulgence of passions, which the gospel is expressly intended to subdue? What is the language of society, but a studied compromise of truth on the most important subjects? What are the habits of the world, but a system of evasion or defiance of acknowledged duties? and what is the universal result of an unrestrained conversation in the world, but indifference to the sacred character of things, and a careless view of sin, as if it lost its real guiltiness of nature, by the circumstances in which we saw it?

This, this indeed, appears to be the great danger to be dreaded from the world. We shall not hear the justice of God generally impeached there; we shall not hear his love or his mercy denied; but we shall find his holiness universally forgotten. We shall find sin spoken of in other terms than in those which his word supplies; and viewed in other ways than his nature would authorise us to entertain. The purity of his nature will either be confused by a mixture with his mercy, or else it will be degraded by being brought down to a similitude with ourselves. From either cause the same effect will result. The holiness of God will be lost sight of; and, as is universally the case, the character of the worshippers will be assimilated to that of the Deity whom they adore: and the world, having formed to itself the idea of a Deity who can behold evil with complacency, and who can, under some circumstances, look upon iniquity with forbearance, will grow more and more indifferent to the moral distinctions of actions, and will call good evil, and evil good, by a different rule from that which the word of God exhibits.

And may I not appeal to your own hearts whether this is not the prevailing

feeling in the world? Where do we see that sensibility of soul, that godly fear of sin, that dread of being separated from God, that purity of mind and heart which flies from every sort of corruption, hating even the garment spotted with the flesh; hating those very weaknesses of nature which subject us to the influence of sin? There are cares in the world, and there are sorrows in the world, and there are labors in the world; but they are not of a godly sort, nor are they referred to the holiness of God as their principle. Men are eaten up with care, but it is not with care for their soul's health, with care to keep clear of sin; but it is with care about preserving their gains undiminished, or increasing their property. Men are worn out with sorrow; but it is not for having lost God's favor, but for having lost the opportunity of making money, or for having lost their lot of comfort in this world. Men labor; but it is not to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards men; but it is to push their fortunes or to secure their interests. For these things they care, and grieve, and labor, as if they were worth the toil. For these things they take pains, for they know that pains are necessary; they know that men will be strict, that offences will be noted, that neglect will be injurious, and that the world will resent inattention and indifference in those who profess to seek for its advantages. But how different is their behaviour when they look towards their Maker? Here, how careless, how neglectful, how at ease they seem to be! They obey, or not, just as it suits their convenience. They feel no compunction when they have erred. They feel no misgiving when they refuse obedience. They seem to imagine that God must be satisfied with what they choose to give; and that their will, not his will; their convenience, not his honor, are the things to be considered. In this way they sin wilfully, they sin continually, they sin without feeling, they sin without regret; they despise the laws of God, they neglect his sabbaths, they profane his name, they forget him as absolutely as if he did not exist, and say that they do no harm; and then, having thus heaped insult upon insult, and added defiance to neglect, they think that they may come at any moment they choose, at some convenient sabbath, or at any hour when trouble sends them

to seek comfort, and be sure of the fullest acceptance from their neglected, their dishonored, their offended Maker!

REV. H. RAIKES.

The Love of God.

It is too plain, that if God had cared as little for us as we cared for God we should have been long since outcast, forsaken, and forgotten: but *herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* And thus it is stated by St. Paul: *God commended his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us:* and again, *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* In these passages we perceive that it means the same thing to be a sinner—to be the enemy of God—and not to love him; and yet for these sinners, for these his enemies, he sent his own Son to be the propitiation for their sins.

Herein is love! The apostle seems to pronounce upon this as if there was no other love in all the world besides; as if every thing like love was swallowed up in this boundless profusion of mercies. It is extraordinary with what cold and composed feelings we can read and think of this extraordinary sacrifice. It is no doubt impossible to comprehend its full extent; perhaps it is the employment of blessed spirits, for ages and ages to come—aye, or for all eternity, to make new discoveries in the love of God and the death of the Redeemer. Grandeur knowledge,—new blessings,—fresh features, from this wonderful sacrifice, may be showing themselves to the spirits of just men made perfect at every moment, world without end. They are *things which the angels desire to look into.*

But God has given us, perhaps, the fullest idea of it that we are capable of conceiving, when he tells us that he was his Son—his only Son. It is as if he desired every one of us to go to his own heart, and find out who is the being upon the earth that is dearest to its affections—husband, wife, or only child; the person whom we regarded with the fondest love and the most unbounded delight; the person in whom your whole soul seems to be wrapped up; in whom you almost live, and move, and have your being; and to imagine this object of your hopes and affections dashed from a state of happi-

ness, and flung helpless into the midst of enemies and persecutors; become *despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;* and at length brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and then descending into the grave with torture, insult, and infamy. God himself seems to teach us to regard it in this point of view; for he said unto Abraham, *Take now thy son—thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest.* He repeats it, as if for the purpose of cutting the father's heart, and giving it a new stab at every word of fondness. *Take now thy son—thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of.* Abraham rose up, and took Isaac his son, and went into the place of which God had told him. Then, on the way, a conversation occurs, in which every word that the son speaks is calculated to make the father's heart bleed freshly. It would be an insult to tell a father what were Abraham's feelings when he bound his son, and took the knife in his hand. At that moment, however, the angel of the Lord called out of heaven, and bade him stay his hand. But when the Son of God bore his cross to the spot of agony and shame, and was laid bleeding upon the altar, no guardian angel descended to relieve his sufferings; and when he cried, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* the whole host of heaven stood still; no voice of consolation was heard, and no minister of mercy descended to save his Son—his only Son, whom he loved.

Such is the idea that God has given us of his love; but still it is imperfect, for it seems as if every thing relating to God was infinite. His power is infinite; and we should judge but poorly of its greatness if we measured it by human power. In like manner his wisdom is infinite; and we should never be able to conceive its extent by comparing it with the greatest wisdom of man. So also may we conclude of his love. The sufferings of Christ appear to contain something in them indescribable to the human imagination, and unfathomable to human discovery. His mysterious agony in the garden, the weight of our sins upon his soul, and the fearful exclamation, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* convey an idea of suffering that we neither do nor can comprehend. Such is the love of God mani-

fested upon the cross—the love of God manifest in the flesh!

But, we may say, where was the necessity of all this vast profusion of suffering; this expenditure of means; this astonishing machinery of redemption? Could not God have forgiven us at a word? Now, only consider what idea it is we form of God, when we imagine that forgiveness is so very easy a matter. We conceive him to be an arbitrary and capricious Being, who can make laws and break them at random, and fling his pardon to his creatures carelessly from his throne. Is this a worthy idea of him *who cannot lie, and who cannot repent?* Recollect that mercy, with us, means the reversing of a law, the changing of an established order of things: our very idea of mercy implies an imperfection in the law, in the decision upon the law, or in the execution of the law. If human laws were perfect, or human judges infallible, where would be the room for mercy? It was a question reserved for the wisdom of Almighty God alone, to prove how justice and mercy could be reconciled; to hold forth forgiveness to the offender without violating, relaxing, or suspending that law, which is *holy, and just, and good*. Accordingly we find that, upon the cross, the violation of that law was visited to the uttermost; that *he bore our sins, and carried our iniquities*; that *the chastisement of our peace was upon him*: and thus we are told, in the passage before us, that *the love of God was manifested in sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*: and again, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*.

It is a terrible truth, which men would do well to recollect more than they do, that the same cross shows God's hatred for sin as well as his love for the sinner; the same cross shows that he cannot forgive iniquity, and yet that he was willing to visit it upon his own Son for our sakes: it shows us his wrath and his love, and the one appears to be the measure of the other. We have been this day endeavouring to fathom his love, and have found it impossible; and yet the very immensity of that love seems to consist in averting wrath, that is equally boundless and inconceivable. Alas! alas! we deceive ourselves strangely by fancying that it is an easy thing for God to forgive sin. Consider well what it is that makes it such an easy thing for you to commit sin;

and you will find that it is because you fancy it an easy thing for God to forgive it.

The great and fearful question with every man amongst us is, *Has the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from all sin?* or, shall he himself abide the awful consequences in the eternal world? For, as surely as God is true, one or other of these must be the case. The word of God supplies us with the means of judgment—*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*. It seems to be founded upon a principle plain and obvious to any man's common sense; if we need no change, we need no mercy. REV. C. WOLFE.

False Views regarding the Mercy of God.

THE holiness and justice of God makes him an irreconcilable enemy to all sin, and the only refuge sinners have, is in the goodness of God; but goodness does not so necessarily prove that God will forgive sin, as justice does that he will punish it. For goodness in its own nature must give place to justice, that is, goodness cannot pardon, while it is unjust to pardon; for an unjust goodness is no divine perfection.

So that the goodness of God, how great soever we conceive it to be, (and we cannot conceive it greater than it is,) does not necessarily prove that God must or will pardon sinners, but only that he will pardon sinners when it is wise and just to do so: but who can tell when God will think it wise and just to do so, without a revelation? or who can tell what it is that makes it wise and just for a good God to forgive sins? A good man does not always think himself bound to forgive those personal injuries and affronts which are offered him, much less is a kind and merciful prince, who is entrusted with the administration of justice, and the sacred authority of government, bound to forgive every malefactor out of pure good nature, which would soon dissolve government, and make authority contemptible; and if we consider God as the Supreme Governor of the world, it will satisfy us, that to forgive sins is not the immediate effect of goodness, but must be tempered and accommodated to the justice and wisdom of government; which we understand so little of, that we can never certainly learn from the mere light of nature when and upon what terms God will forgive sin.

The general hope and expectation of

mankind is, that God will forgive all humble penitent sinners; and yet I cannot find, that any man ever thought, that mere repentance was sufficient to obtain our pardon; for all religions had some instituted rites to appease their gods; which seems to argue that natural sense they all had, that some atonement and expiation as well as repentance was necessary to pardon.

Nor can reason prove the contrary. Repentance renders men fit objects of mercy, when no other reason hinders; but the reasons of government may supersede the inclinations to show mercy. How often does a merciful prince hang a penitent malefactor without any blemish to the mercy of his government? And if good men and good princes are not always bound to forgive penitents, then repentance itself alone cannot entitle us to mercy.

So that we can have no security of the pardon of our sins, but by the gospel of Christ, wherein God has expressly promised the remission of sins to all true penitents, in the name, and through the merits and mediation of Christ.

What a consolation is this to sinners! Who would be without the certain hopes of forgiveness, for all the world! How terrible is it to believe that there is a just God, who will punish sinners, without knowing or believing a Saviour! Did these men duly consider things, they would think deism to be the most dangerous state in the world, which has no covenant, no promise, no priest, no sacrifice; which might be the religion of the state of innocence, but is no religion for sinners.

DR. W. SHERLOCK.

What is it that the world understands or means when it speaks of the mercy of God? or what may we infer that the opinion of the world on this subject is, from considering the way in which it acts?

That God is merciful no one ventures to doubt. Scripture positively declares that mercy is an attribute, a favorite attribute of the Deity; and the prolongation of our lives from day to day, the continuance of our existence, under the various circumstances of provocation and offence which it includes, brings the evidence of mercy home to every conscience. But beyond this present mercy, which the Scriptures call long-suffering, patience, forbearance; and which is designed to glorify the goodness of God in those that

are saved, and to justify his severity to those that perish; beyond this, which is the Scripture view of mercy, and the only mercy which we dare to contemplate in our Maker, the world presumes on a species of mercy which extends to another state of being, and which offers hopes of pardon differing from those which are included in the gospel. The world speaks of a mercy which not only offers the means of recovery, but which gives it; a mercy which not only is *long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, 2 Peter iii. 9; but which including in itself all the riches of the grace of God, or rather confusing all his attributes in the exercise of one, forgives, from a feeling of compassion, without waiting for any satisfaction to the justice of God, or looking for any change in the nature of the sinner. The language and the system of the world, therefore, on this subject is, that God will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss; that the views which are given of his justice and his holiness are extravagant and unjust, if ever they appear inconsistent with the exercise of mercy and compassion; and that attribute of mercy, on which the soul naturally dwells with such complacency, is invested with a degree of superiority which raises it above all the other glories of our Maker's nature, and which, indeed, builds its elevation on their ruin and destruction.

The mercy of God under this representation, ceases to be that pure and holy quality which the believer contemplates with adoration in the process of man's conversion; which there suspends the judgment that was deserved, pleads with the thoughtless, and invites the penitent; but it becomes a feeling like that of natural affection or compassion; a feeling which shrinks from the sight of sorrow, and pronounces pardon in order to avoid the pain of punishing. It is described, not as acting in unison with the justice, the holiness, the goodness of God, but as contradicting or subverting all. It is not seen seeking the highest and most perfect good of man, by sanctifying and renewing his soul, but it is represented as sacrificing future holiness for the sake of peace; and as accomplishing man's salvation by a sort of sovereign act of grace, which dispenses with law, instead of making any provision for satisfying its rightful claims,

In this way, instead of raising our ideas of heaven, by the display of that love which opens and prepares our way to it, it degrades the gift by the facility with which it is bestowed, and lowers its value by the character of the persons to whom it is extended. Under such a view of the mercy of God, we are taught that the errors into which men fall through the influence of the flesh, the transgressions they commit in compliance with the usage of the world, the sins which do no harm to others, and exist only in the mind or the desires, need excite no serious alarm. The mercy of God is named with confidence, as the security for their pardon; and any application to other sources of hope, any reference to the mediation of Christ, any necessity for repentance or renewal of the soul, is spoken of as needless, and treated as derogatory to the fullness of peace derived from this single attribute of mercy.

Under this faith the world is avowedly living, and we see the result of this faith in the inconsistent lives they lead. We see Christians by name, who are destitute of all the distinguishing marks of Christianity. We see disciples of Jesus who, far from taking up their cross to follow him, count even his yoke an intolerable restraint, and live in habitual transgression of what they know to be their duty. We see men professing the faith of Christ, while they are trampling under foot his commandments, despising his ordinances, ridiculing the spirituality and holiness of his service, and disclaiming all the peculiar marks of the gospel. And we find these men meeting every reproof, and checking every misgiving of conscience, by referring to the mercy of God as the foundation of their hope; losing sight of every other attribute in short in contemplating this; and trusting themselves to this, without a thought or a question, as to the way in which it may be obtained, or the extent to which it may be carried. Nor can we deny that this is the prevailing system in the world. A loose indefinite notion of the mercy of God has superseded every other notion of his character, and bids fair to neutralise the whole efficacy of religious truth. Men do not, it is true, take the trouble now to attempt denying the existence of God, for that would be a painful task to indolence like ours; but, they have adopted an easier

way of evading his authority by misrepresenting his nature. They confess that he exists, but not as he really is. They admit that he is just, and good, and holy, but not to the degree or extent to which the tenor of his word would guide us. They do not deny the authenticity of the Scriptures, but they lower the force of the Scripture record by their explanations. They are not atheists, but they are idolaters; and instead of fighting against the truth, as our forefathers did, with a stubborn resolution to show that they are in the right, they find it more convenient to pervert the truth in order to make it seem that they are not in the wrong. For this purpose they put out of sight all the pure essential attributes of God, the holiness by which he abhors sin; the truth and the justice by which he stands pledged to condemn it; and holding up the single attribute of mercy, detached and separate from the other constituent parts of the divine character, they give it a prominence which it never ought to have possessed in the symmetry of faith, and which it never would possess, when combined and viewed in harmony with the other attributes of God. . . . Under these representations the mercy of God becomes a universal refuge. Not, however, like that refuge which the penitent sinner beholds with joy in the gospel, and which was typified by the cities of refuge for the Israelites; but a refuge like those asylums of ancient times in which criminals of every description took shelter, and which offered indiscriminate security to all who fled within their precincts. At the same time that the quality is degraded by the characters of those who plead its application to themselves, its purity is sacrificed by accommodation to the practice of men. It is spoken of in terms which describe it as nearly resembling that easiness of temper in man, which passes by the little provocations of his equals in common life with indifference; or, as being akin to that natural tenderness, which seeks a relief for its own feelings by granting relief to others. God is deprived of his own appropriate glories in order to be invested with those which belong to man; and the work of idolatry is completed by a representation which assimilates the Creator to the creature in the exercise of his prerogative of mercy.

REV. H. RAIKES.

The free Fountain and Spring of all Grace and Mercy is in the bosom of the Father.

CHRISTIANS walk oftentimes with exceedingly troubled hearts, concerning the thoughts of the Father towards them; they are well persuaded of the Lord Christ, and his good-will: the difficulty lies in what is their acceptance with the Father, what is his heart towards them? *Show us the Father, and it shall suffice*, John xiv. 8. Now this ought to be so far away, that his love ought to be looked on as the fountain from which all other sweetness flow. Thus the apostle sets it out, *After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared*, Tit. iii. 4. It is of the Father of whom he speaks; for he tells us, ver. 6, that he *makes out unto us, or sheds that love upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour*. And this love he makes the hinge upon which the great alteration, and translation of the saints doth turn: for, saith he, ver. 3, *We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice, and envy, hateful, and hating one another*. All naught, all out of order, and vile. Whence then is our recovery? The whole rise of it is from this love of God, flowing out by the ways there described. For when the kindness and love of God appeared, that is, in the fruits of it, then did this alteration ensue. To secure us hereof, there is not any thing that hath a loving and tender nature in the world, and doth act suitably thereunto, which God hath not compared himself unto. Separate all weakness and imperfection which is in them, yet great impressions of love must abide. He is a father, a mother, a shepherd, a hen over chickens, and the like. Psal. ciii. 13. Isa. lxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 6. Isa. lxvi. 13. Psal. xxiii. 1. Isa. xl. 11. Matt. xxiii. 37. . . .

It is true, there is not an immediate acting of faith upon the Father, but by the Son. *He is the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by him*, John xiv. 6. *He is the merciful High Priest over the house of God, by whom we have access to the throne of grace*, Eph. ii. 18; by him is our manuduction unto the Father. *By him we believe in God*, 1 Pet. i. 21. But this is

that I say: When by and through Christ we have an access unto the Father, we then behold his glory also, and see his love that he peculiarly bears unto us, and act faithfully thereon. We are then, I say, to eye it, to believe it, to receive it as in him; the issues and fruits thereof being made out unto us through Christ alone. Though there be no light for us but in the beams, yet we may by beams see the sun, which is the fountain of it. Though all our refreshment actually lie in the streams, yet by them we are led up unto the fountain. Jesus Christ, in respect of the love of the Father, is but the beam, the stream, wherein though actually all our light, our refreshment lies, yet by him we are led to the fountain, the sun of eternal love itself. Would believers exercise themselves herein, they would find it a matter of no small spiritual improvement in their walking with God. This is that which is aimed at. Many dark and disturbed thoughts are apt to arise in this thing. Few can carry their hearts and minds to this height by faith, as to rest their souls in the love of the Father; they live below it, in the troublesome region of hopes and fears, storms and clouds. All here is serene and quiet. But how to attain to this pitch they know not. This is the will of God, that he may always be eyed as benign, kind, tender, loving, and unchangeable therein; and that peculiarly as the Father, as the great fountain and spring of all gracious communications and fruits of love. This is that which Christ came to reveal; God as a Father. John i. 18; that name which he declares to those who are given him out of the world, John xvii. 6. And this is that which he effectually leads us to by himself, as he is the only way of going to God, as a Father, John xiv. 5, 6, that is, as love; and by doing so, gives us the rest which he promiseth; for the love of the Father is the only rest of the soul. It is true, as was said, we do not this formally in the first instant of believing. We believe in God through Christ, 1 Pet. i. 21; faith seeks out rest for the soul. This is presented to it by Christ, the Mediator, as the only procuring cause. Here it abides not; but by Christ it hath access to the Father, Eph. ii. 18; into his love; finds out that he is love, as having a design, a purpose of love, a good pleasure towards us from eternity; a delight, a complacency, a good-will in Christ; all

cause of anger and aversion being taken away. The soul being thus by faith through Christ, and by him brought into the bosom of God, into a comfortable persuasion and spiritual perception and sense of his love, there reposes and rests itself. . . . It is exceeding acceptable unto God, even our Father, that we should thus hold communion with him in his love; that he may be received into our souls as one full of love, tenderness, and kindness, towards us. Flesh and blood is apt to have very hard thoughts of him; to think he is always angry, yea implacable: that it is not for poor creatures to draw nigh to him: that nothing in the world is more desirable than never to come into his presence, or, as they say, where he hath any thing to do. *Who among us shall dwell with that devouring fire? who among us shall inhabit with those everlasting burnings?* Isa. xxxiii. 41, say the sinners in Sion. *And I knew thou wast an austere man,* saith the evil servant in the gospel. Now there is not any thing more grievous to the Lord, nor more subseivient to the design of Satan upon the soul, than such thoughts as these. Satan claps his hands (if I may so say) when he can take up the soul with such thoughts of God: he hath enough, all that he doth desire. This hath been his design and way from the beginning. *The first blood that murderer shed,* Gen. iii. 21, was by this means. He leads our first parents into hard thoughts of God; 'hath God said so? hath he threatened you with death? he knows well enough it will be better with you: with this engine did he batter and overthrow all mankind in one: and being mindful of his ancient conquest, he readily useth the same weapons wherewith then he so successfully contended. Now it is exceeding grievous to the Spirit of God to be so slandered in the hearts of those whom he dearly loves. How doth he expostulate this with Sion? *What iniquity have you seen in me,* saith he, Jer. v. 31, *have I been a wilderness unto you, or a land of darkness?* Isa. xl. 27-29. xlix. 15, 16. Sion hath said, *The Lord hath forgotten me, and my God hath forsaken me; but, can a mother, &c.* The Lord takes nothing worse at the hands of his, than such hard thoughts of him, knowing full well what fruit this bitter root is like to bear: what alienations of heart, what

drawings back, what unbelief, and tergiversations in our walking with him. How unwilling is a child to come into the presence of an angry father. Consider then this in the first place: receiving of the Father as he holds out love to the soul, gives him the honor he aims at, and is exceeding acceptable unto him. He often sets it out in an eminent manner that it may be so received. *He commends his love unto us,* Rom. v. 8. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us!* John iii. 1. Whence then is this folly? Men are afraid to have good thoughts of God. They think it a boldness to eye God as good, gracious, tender, kind, loving: I speak of saints; but for the other side, they can judge him hard, austere, severe, almost implacable, and fierce (the very worst affections of the very worst of men, and most hated of him, Rom. i. 31. Tim. iii. 3, and think herein they do well.

Is not this soul-deceit from Satan? Was it not his design from the beginning to inject such thoughts of God? Assure thyself then, there is nothing more acceptable unto the Father than for us to keep up our hearts unto him, as the eternal fountain of all that rich grace, which flows out to sinners in the blood of Jesus. Amen.

This will be exceeding effectual to endear thy soul unto God, to cause thee to delight in him, and to make thy abode with him. Many saints have no greater burden in their lives, than that their hearts do not come clearly and fully up constantly to delight and rejoice in God: that there is still an indisposedness of spirit unto close walking with him. What is at the bottom of this distemper? Is it not their unskilfulness in, or neglect of, this duty, even of holding communion with the Father in love? So much as we see of the love of God, so much shall we delight in him, and no more. Every other discovery of God without this will but make the soul fly from him. But if the heart be once much taken up with this, the eminency of the Father's love, it cannot choose but be overpowered, conquered, and endeared unto him. This, if any thing, will work upon us, to make our abode with him. If the love of a father will not make a child delight in him, what will? Put then this to the venture; exercise your thoughts upon this very thing, the eternal, free, and fruitful love of the Father, and see if your hearts,

be not wrought upon to delight in him. I dare boldly say, believers will find it as thriving a course, as ever they pitched on in their lives. Sit down a little at the fountain, and you will quickly have a farther discovery of the sweetness of the streams. You who have run from him, will not be able after awhile to keep at a distance for a moment.

DR. J. OWEN.

Christ saith, *I say not that I will pray for you* that God may save you, I who am about to die for you, *I say not that I will pray for you*. But though I speak this to insinuate in the highest manner, that I will; (for if I spend my blood for you, will I not spend my breath for you?) yet the truth is, that the case so stands, that but for God's own ordination, I need not do it, *for the Father himself loveth you*: that is, the Father of his own motion, and proper good-will towards you, and not wrought in him by me, doth love you, and beareth so much love to you, that he can deny you nothing, for he is your Father as well as mine. How much more then shall you be saved, when I shall join my intercession with yours, and use all my interest in him for you!

Christ useth this speech in order to correct the erroneous idea which harboureth in many of our hearts, who look upon God in the matter of salvation as one who is hardly entreated to save sinners; and we are apt to think that when he is induced to pardon, he doth it only at Christ's entreaty, and for his sake, having otherwise no innate motion in himself sufficient to incline his heart to it; but that it is in this transaction by Christ with him, as a favorite procures a pardon for a traitor, whose person the king cares not for; only at his favorite's suit and request he grants it, which else he would never have done. You are deceived, saith Christ, it is otherwise: my Father's heart is as much towards you, and for your salvation, as mine is. He of himself loveth you. And the

truth is, that God loved us of himself at first as much as ever he hath done since: and all that Christ doth for us is but the expression of that love which originally filled the Father's heart. Thus we find, that out of that love he gave Christ for us; so it is said *God, so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son to die, &c.* Yea, Christ's death was but a mean to commend or set forth that love of his unto us: so it was God also that did himself give our persons unto Christ, and set him on work to mediate for us: *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself*. He only used Christ as his instrument to execute his own designs. All the blessings he means to give us he first purposed, and intended in himself, out of the good pleasure of his will, yet *in Christ* as the mean through which he would convey them: yea, Christ adds nothing to the love of God's heart, only he draws it out, and makes it flow forth, whose current had otherwise been stopped. The truth is, that God employed Christ to solicit mercy on our behalf for an honorable way of obtaining it, as also to make us prize this favor the more; so that his heart is as ready to give all to us, as Christ's is to ask, and this out of his pure love to us.

DR. GOODWIN.

God Unsearchable.

Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High; whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of his name; yet our soundest knowledge is, to know that we know him not as indeed he is, neither can know him; and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confess without confession that his glory is inexplicable, his greatness above our capacity and reach. He is above, and we upon earth; therefore it behoveth our words to be wary and few.

HOOKE.

SECTION III.—OF GOD THE SON.

HIS PERSON, OFFICES, AND CHARACTER.

What think ye of Christ?

A QUESTION of greater importance was never proposed, in whatever light we con-

sider it, than that which was once asked by the adorable Redeemer himself, *What think ye of Christ?* . . .

In some, who call themselves Chris-

tians, the utmost ignorance prevails as to the Author and doctrine of Christianity. A spirit of carnal ease and sensual indulgence, with a total indifference as to heavenly truth, prevents all serious inquiry upon the subject. The treatment which the Redeemer meets with from such professors of his name is very similar to that predicted by the prophet: *He shall grow up like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him.* We lament the literal fulfilment of this prediction in the conduct of the Jewish people, without reflecting how nearly our conduct corresponds with theirs. His name is 'called upon us' as Christians, but where are those amongst us who manifest that they are suitably influenced by their views of his excellency and glory? The attention given to his person, to his authority, and to his salvation, is more like that of persons who are speculating upon uncertainties, than of those who feel themselves everlastingly interested in them. If, however, the truths and discoveries of the gospel be of any value, they must, from their very nature, be of infinite and eternal moment. But men, when ignorant of the unchangeable holiness of the divine nature; the extent and spirituality of the law of God, and of the consequent evil of sin; the condemned and perishing state of every sinner as under the law; and the impossibility of his appearing with approbation in the sight of God, without the rich provision made in the covenant of redemption in Christ Jesus; little concern themselves as to the person, character, or blessings of the Redeemer. Ask them what they think of Christ, and it will be evident, as to many, that they have not yet thought sufficiently to know who or what he is, the work which he has performed, or the benefits we are taught to expect from him. In a Christian land, in the midst of those privileges and means which frequently solicit their attention to these things, the opportunities of information are neglected; and, through indolence or aversion, the ways of ignorance and error fatally preferred....

If, however, this criminal indifference be overcome; if the mind, influenced by the importance of religious truth, be attentive to its pursuit; how often is a system formed, independent of the word of

God, wherein moral duties and moral virtues are exalted into the place of Christ! His name is admitted into the plan, but it is an admission of mere civility, and not of cordial regard. For it is very observable, that the person and offices of the Son of God have no necessary connection with the religious system of many who call themselves Christians. Their system is complete without Christ; nor would it be at all deranged, if his name, offices, and salvation were totally omitted.

There are others, however, who think more highly of the Lord our Redeemer. They acknowledge him as the Saviour; are willing to be indebted to him for the supply of their deficiencies, and for rendering their own obedience acceptable and justifying. The error involved in these views arises from very inadequate conceptions of the state of man; the nature, extent, and demands of the law of God; the undertaking of the Saviour; and the mystery of redemption. This error also more easily deludes the mind, as, by including a partial admission of truth, it affords a more plausible appearance to falsehood. Discerning something of the fall, and consequent depravity of human nature, and desirous of escaping the wrath to come, such persons are willing to do much, in order to their acceptance before God; and, perceiving their inability to do all, they would, in some measure, trust in Christ to complete the work; but, not being convinced how totally guilty, ruined, and helpless is the situation of fallen man, they cannot be persuaded to look to Christ alone for justification and salvation, but seek to be their own saviours, through the merit of Christ. This is the general scheme and sad delusion of modern divinity. I say, the sad delusion; for, however gratifying to the pride of man, surely it needs but little consideration to see that this system is not founded on the testimony of God. It gives not that glory to Christ which he demands of us, but seeks to divide with him the honor of justification and salvation. It is in fact a rejection of the word of truth through the pride of an unbelieving heart. This alone it is which leads men into such unscriptural dependences, and from which so many different opinions are formed even upon the fundamental truths of the gospel. Hence also it is, that we are compelled to lament that there is nothing in

which men more differ than in those things where the Scriptures are the most plain and decisive. Some deny the divine glory of the Saviour ; some, his satisfaction to the divine law, and atonement for the sins of his people ; while to others, the freeness and fulness of his salvation are objects of a jealous fear. The necessity of the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and his continued influences for the support of the Christian life and the Christian graces, are ridiculed by some who profess themselves Christians ; while others, from false views of the nature of the gospel, claim indulgence in the practice of sin, and abuse and dishonor the doctrines of grace. Thus, while the name of Christ receives the outward tokens of respect, how often is his person insulted and his work debased, and himself practically denied, either as the Saviour or as the Prince !

In the view of some, who call themselves Christians, the glorious Redeemer is acknowledged only in a part of his offices, as a Prophet and a Teacher sent from God, who hath illustrated his instructions by the most perfect example and pattern of virtue, and confirmed his doctrine and his precepts by his death. In the manner in which these represent him, he rises but little above the honor of Socrates, Plato, or Seneca, except in the

higher sublimity and excellency of his instructions. He does indeed teach us a morality of an higher order, suited to the majesty and holiness of God, and the true felicity and dignity of our nature ; a moral practice founded upon a principle of which the heathen were totally ignorant, the principle of the love of God ; a spiritual morality, arising from spiritual-mindedness, and a conduct guided by a *conversation in heaven*. But however eminently exalted the morality of the gospel, can this possibly be what the Scripture emphatically calls *the wisdom of God in a mystery ; even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory ; which none of the princes of this world knew ?* 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8. *The unsearchable riches of Christ ? The mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God ?* Eph. iii. 8, 9. How vastly does such a system fall below what is implied in these expressions of admiration ; below the glories which are attributed to the Redeemer, and the benefits we are said to derive from him ! No ; the plan of the gospel is far beyond any system of morals, however transcendent in their excellency. It is *the wisdom and the power of God for the salvation of a sinner*, through the person and work of an Almighty Redeemer. REV. W. GOODE.

Divinity and Humanity of Christ.

THAT Christ is truly and essentially God, and also that he appeared in this world a man in the absolute and perfect sense, will be advantageously elucidated by a summary comparison of the representations made of him in both these characters.

As GOD it is said :

That he is God, the true God, the mighty God, the great God, Jehovah, I am, and Emmanuel, &c. That his goings forth were from of old, from everlasting ; that he was in the beginning set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, &c. That he was in the beginning with God ; rejoicing always before him ; present, when he prepared the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth ; and possessed of glory with him before ever the world was. With reference to his greatness *as God* united to man, it is said, that Gabriel predicted his birth, an angel declared to the shepherds of Bethlehem that he was born, and a choir of the heavenly host sung together his natal hymn.

That he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

ANTH.

As MAN it is said :

That he was an infant, a child, a man, a carpenter, the son of Joseph and Mary, and the brother, or cousin-german, of James and Joses. That he was born in the reign of Herod the Great, and of the Roman emperor Augustus Cæsar. That he was born in Judea ; in Bethlehem, the city of David ; in the stable of an inn ; and was cradled in a manger. That he was refused a place in the inn, forgotten in the stable, and unfurnished even with the ordinary comforts provided for the children of peasants.

That he grew while a child really and perceptibly, in wisdom and stature, and

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As GOD it is said :

That all things are his ; that he upholds them by the word of his power ; and that they were made for him, and by him.

That he is Lord of all things, of angels, principalities, and powers ; and will subdue, and is able to subdue, all things unto himself, and put all opposition under his feet ; and that his throne and dominion are for ever and ever.

That he was originally rich in the possession of all things ; and the continual delight of his Father in the heavens ; where the angels unceasingly worshipped him.

That at the close of this world he will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and with all his holy angels ; will summon the dead from their graves ; will gather all nations before the throne of his glory ; will judge both angels and men according to their works ; will punish the wicked with an everlasting destruction from the glory of his power ; will conduct the righteous into heaven ; and will cause them to live, and reign with him for ever and ever.

Finally, in his *divine character*, it is said, that he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

At the close of this wonderful career he was raised from the dead. He himself informs us, that *he laid down his own life voluntarily*, and that no one was *able to take it out of his hands*. He also informs us, that *he himself took it up again*. Accordingly, he rose from the grave on the third day, and after conversing familiarly with his disciples *concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*, forty days, he ascended to heaven in a cloud of glory, attended by the heavenly host ; entered the world of glory in triumph, and *sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high* ; or as it is elsewhere expressed, *this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down for ever on the right hand of God*. At his name, henceforth, *every knee* is required to bow, of things in heaven, and things in

As MAN it is said :

in favor with God and man, and therefore changed day by day, and that through his life.

That he had not where to lay his head, and was sustained, without any property of his own, by the bounty of his disciples, and, at times, of others.

That he was subject to the Jewish and Roman governments, paid tribute, and performed all the usual duties of a child to his parents, and of a subject to his ruler ; and was exposed to the direct assaults and temptations of the devil.

That, for our sakes, he became poor, afflicted, despised, and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; lightly esteemed, hated, and persecuted.

That he was betrayed by Judas ; seized by the Roman soldiers ; brought before the Sanhedrim ; judged, condemned to death ; again brought before Pilate, judged and condemned ; buffeted, crowned with thorns, mocked, spit upon, scourged, nailed to the cross, and carried to the tomb.

But that having emptied himself, and taken upon him the form of a servant, he was born in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

earth, and things under the earth ; and every tongue to confess, that he is the Lord, or sovereign of all things, *to the glory of God the Father*. The throne of infinite dominion is accordingly, and appropriately, styled *the throne of God and the Lamb*. Before this throne *the four living ones cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and who art, and who art to come*. The four-and-twenty elders cast their crowns at his feet, and say, *Thou art worthy, O Lord ! to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created*. And the multitude of angels round about the throne, and the living ones, and the elders, say with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and*

blessing: and every creature; which is in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, and in the sea, is heard, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. To this divine ascription the four Living Ones subjoin their solemn Amen.

On this comparative view of the wonderful subject under consideration, I make the following remarks:

1. It is evident to the least consideration, that the things which are here said of Christ are exceedingly unlike each other.

So unlike are they that, if we suppose two beings to be the subjects of holiness, their characters cannot be more different from each other than the things are which are here declared concerning Christ.

Let any man attempt to describe two, the most distant characters, of two, the most distant holy beings, and he will find himself unable to place them farther asunder than these two characters of Christ are placed. Therefore,

2. These two characters cannot be given to any being possessed of a simple nature.

That they are all truly said will not be here called in question. If we suppose the person of whom they are said to be only God, we shall be obliged either to say, with the Sabellians, that Christ was no other than God manifesting himself in one particular form; or, with the Patripassians, that the Father lived here, suffered, and died, as a man; or, with the Docetæ, that Christ was God only; that his appearance as a man was an illusion; that he had a visionary body; and suffered only in appearance and pretence; while Judas Iscariot, or some other culprit, was crucified in his stead.

It is plainly impossible that the same simple being should be *set up from everlasting, be the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending; and yet be born in Judea in the reign of Herod the Great: be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and yet increase in wisdom, and in favor with God and man:—create all things visible and invisible; and yet be made of a woman: be the lawgiver to the universe; and yet be made under the law:—uphold all things by the word of his power; and yet be a petitioner for the daily supplies of his wants, and the protection of his person: possess all things, and yet have not where to lay his head:—know all things; and*

yet not know, as (if we adopt the common interpretation) we must suppose he did not know the time of the destruction of Jerusalem: be the final Judge and Rewarder of the quick and the dead; and yet be tried, condemned, and executed by men: Be *in the form of God, and justly think it no robbery to be equal with God; and yet be a servant, a man, and a frail and dying man.*

But all these things, and innumerable others, substantially of the same nature in both respects are declared concerning Christ. All also are declared by God himself. They are therefore true, and true in the natural, obvious sense. Of course they are *worthy of all acceptation.*

It follows then that Christ is, notwithstanding the sneers of Unitarians, God and man. In the language of the Scriptures, *the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.* Yet, humble as were the station and circumstances in which he appeared, we are able still to *behold his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.*

DR. DWIGHT.

Only this we may safely say, and must firmly hold; that as the distinction of the persons in the Holy Trinity hindereth not the unity of the nature of the Godhead, although every person entirely holdeth his own incommunicable property; so neither doth the distinction of the two natures in our Mediator any way cross the unity of his person, although each nature remaineth entire in itself, and retaineth the properties agreeing thereunto, without any conversion, composition, commixion, or confusion.

When Moses beheld the bush burning with fire, and yet no whit consumed, he wondered at the sight, and said, *I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt,* Exod. iii. 2, 3, 5, 6. Acts vii. 31, 32. But when God thereupon called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, *Draw not nigh hither,* and told him who he was, Moses trembled, hid his face, and durst not behold God. Yet although being thus warned, we dare not draw so nigh; what doth hinder but we may stand aloof of, and wonder at this great sight? *Our God is a consuming fire,* saith the apostle: Heb. xii. 29; and a question we find propounded in the prophet, *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?*

who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings? Isa. xxxiii. 14. Moses was not like other prophets; but *God spake unto him face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend*, Num. xii. 6, 7, 8, Exod. xxxiii. 11; and yet for all that, when he besought the Lord that he would show him his glory, he received his answer, *Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live*, Exod. xxxiii. 19, 20. Abraham before him, though a special *friend of God*, Isa. xli. 8, and the *father of the faithful*, Rom. iv. 11. 16. Gal. iii. 7, the children of God, yet held it a great matter that he should take upon him so much as to *speak unto God, being but dust and ashes*, Gen. xviii. 27. Yea, the very angels themselves (which are greater in power and might), 2 Pet. ii. 11, *are jain to cover their faces when they stand before him, as not being able to behold the brightness of his glory*, Isa. vi. 2.

With what astonishment then may we behold our dust and ashes assumed into the undivided unity of God's own person; and admitted to dwell here as an inmate under the same roof? and yet in the midst of those everlasting burnings, the bush to remain unconsumed, and to continue fresh and green for evermore. Yea, how should not we with Abraham rejoice to see this day, wherein not only our nature in the person of our Lord Jesus is found to dwell for ever in those everlasting burnings; but, in and by him, our own persons also are brought so nigh thereunto, that *God doth set his sanctuary and tabernacle among us, and dwell with us*, Lev. xxvi. 11, 12, Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27, Rev. xxi. 3, and (which is much more) maketh us ourselves to be the *house and the habitation wherein he is pleased to dwell by his Spirit*, Heb. iii. 6, Eph. ii. 22; according to that of the apostle, *Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said; I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*, 2 Cor. vi. 16; and that most admirable prayer, which our Saviour himself made unto his Father in our behalf: *I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast*

sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me, John xvii. 20, 21, 22, 23.

ABP. USHER.

Jesus was pleased to be born of a poor mother in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of humility and poverty; and no man will have cause to complain of his coarse robe, if he remembers the swaddling clothes of this holy child: nor to be disquieted at his hard bed when he considers Jesus laid in a manger; nor to be discontented at his thin table, when he calls to mind the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast milk. . . .

The condition of the person who was born is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty and a world of inconveniences, is the Son of the living God; of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars; he is God eternal. He is also by reason of the personal union of the Divinity with his human nature, the Son of God, not by adoption, as good men, and beatified angels are; but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is the heir of his Father's glories and possessions, not by succession, (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication. He is the express image of his Father's person according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his Godhead being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity. And after all this he is our Saviour; that to our duties of wonder and adoration, we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us.

Here then are concentrated the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility; and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures, if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity, and in the manger where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is God, his throne is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is Man, he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is

seated upon a super-exalted throne; as Man, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle-bands. As God, he is encircled with millions of angels; as Man, in the company of beasts: as God, he is the eternal Word of the Father, eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient and without need; and yet he submitted himself to a condition imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous: and this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason, and our passions, and capacities upon that saying of St. Paul, *He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed*, 1 Cor. xvi. 20.

Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he, St. John xviii. 4.

JESUS himself begins the inquiry, and leads them into their errand, and tells them that he was Jesus of Nazareth whom they sought. But this also, which was an answer so gentle, had in it a strength greater than the eastern wind, or the voice of thunder; for God was in that still voice, and it struck them down to the ground. And yet they, and so do we still persist to persecute our Lord, and to provoke the eternal God, who can with the breath of his mouth, with a word or a sign, or a thought, reduce us into nothing, or into a worse condition, even an eternal duration of torments, and cohabitation with a never ending misery. And if we cannot bear a soft answer of the merciful God, how shall we dare to provoke the wrath of the Almighty Judge? But in this instance there was a rare mixture of effects, as there was in Christ of natures; the voice of a man, and the power of God. For it is observed by the doctors of the primitive ages, that from the nativity of our Lord to the day of his death, the divinity and humanity did so communicate in effects, that no great action passed, but it was like the sun shining through a cloud, or a beauty with a thin veil drawn

over it; they gave illustration and testimony to each other. The holy Jesus was born a tender and a crying infant, but is adored by the magi as a king; by the angels as their God. He is circumcised as a man, but a name is given him to signify him to be the Saviour of the world. He is presented in the temple as the Son of man, but by Simeon and Anna he is celebrated with divine praises for the Messiah, the Son of God. He is baptised in Jordan as a sinner, but the Holy Ghost descending upon him proclaimed him to be the well-beloved of God. He is hungry in the desert as a man, but sustained his body without meat and drink for forty days together by the power of his divinity: there he is tempted of Satan as a weak man, and the angels of light minister unto him as their supreme Lord. And now a little before his death, when he was to take upon him all the affronts, miseries and exinanitions of the most miserable, he receives testimonies from above, which are most wonderful: for he was transfigured on Mount Tabor, entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, had the acclamations of the people; when he was dying he darkened the sun; when he was dead he opened the sepulchres; when he was fast nailed to the cross he made the earth to tremble; now when he suffers himself to be apprehended by a guard of soldiers, he strikes them all to the ground only by replying to their answer, that the words of the prophet might be verified, *Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold it is I.* BP. TAYLOR.

Necessity for Christ being God and Man.

THE Godhead is of that infinite perfection, that it cannot possibly be subject to any passion. He therefore that had no other nature but the Godhead, could not pay such a debt as this; the discharge whereof consisted in suffering and dying. It was also fit that God's justice should have been satisfied in that nature which had transgressed; and that the same nature should suffer the punishment that had committed the offence. *Forasmuch, then, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all*

their lifetime subject to bondage. Such and so great was the love of God the Father towards us, that *he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*; and so transcendent was the love of the Son of God towards the sons of men, that he desired not to be spared; but rather than they should lie under the power of death, was of himself most willing to suffer death for them: which seeing in that infinite nature, which by eternal generation he received from his Father, he could not do; he resolved in the appointed time to take unto himself a mother, and out of her substance to have a body framed unto himself, wherein he might *become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*, for our redemption. And therefore when he cometh into the world, he saith unto his Father, *A body hast thou fitted me; Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* By the which will, saith the apostle, *we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Thus we see it was necessary for the satisfaction of this debt, that our Mediator should be man; but he that had no more in him than a man could never be able to go through with so great a work. For if there should be found a man as righteous as Adam was at his first creation, who would be content to suffer for the offence of others, his suffering possibly might serve for the redemption of one soul; it would be not sufficient ransom for those innumerable multitudes that were to be *redeemed to God out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation.* Neither could any man or angel be able to hold out, if a punishment equivalent to the endless sufferings of all the sinners in the world should at once be laid upon him. Yea, the very powers of Christ himself, upon whom *the Spirit of might did rest*, were so shaken in the sharp encounter, that he, who was the most accomplished pattern of all fortitude, stood *sore amazed*, and with a *strong crying and tears* prayed that, *if it were possible the hour might pass from him.*

This man therefore being to offer one sacrifice for sins for ever; to the burning of that sacrifice he must not only bring the coals of his love as strong as death, and as ardent as the fire which hath a most vehement flame, but he must add thereunto those everlasting burnings also, even the flames of his most glorious Deity:

and therefore *through the eternal Spirit* must he *offer himself without spot unto God*; that thereby he might obtain for us an *eternal redemption.* The blood whereby the church is purchased must be *God's own blood*: and to that end must *the Lord of glory be crucified; the Prince and Author of life be killed*; he whose *eternal generation no man can declare, be cut off out of the land of the living*; and the *man* that is God's own *fellow* be thus *smitten*; according to that which God himself foretold by his prophet: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* The people of Israel, we read, did so value the life of David their king, that they counted him to be worth *ten thousand* of themselves: how shall we then value the life of *David's Lord*, who is *the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords*? It was indeed our nature that suffered, but he that suffered in that nature *is over all, God blessed for ever*: and for such a person to have suffered but one hour, was more than if all other persons had suffered ten thousand millions of years.

But put the case also, that the life of any other singular man might be equivalent to all the lives of whole mankind; yet the laying down of that life would not be sufficient to do the deed, unless he that had power to lay it down had power likewise to take it up again. For, to be detained always in that *prison, from whence there is no coming out before the payment of the uttermost farthing*, is to lie always under execution, and to quit the plea that full payment of the debt wherein our surety stood engaged for us. And therefore the apostle upon that ground doth rightly conclude, that *if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins*: and consequently, that as he must be *delivered to death for our offences*, so he must be *raised again for our justification.*

Yea, our Saviour himself knowing full well what he was to undergo for our sakes, told us beforehand, that the *Comforter* whom he would send unto us should *convince the world*, that is, fully satisfy the consciences of the sons of men, concerning that everlasting *righteousness*, which was to be brought in by him, upon this

very ground: *Because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more . . .* And this is the evidence we have to show of that *righteousness*, whereby we stand justified in God's sight: according to the apostle, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

Now although an ordinary man may easily part with his life; yet doth it not lie in his power to resume it again at his will and pleasure. But he that must do the turn for us, must be able to say as our Jesus did: *I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* And in another place: *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up,* saith he unto the Jews, *speaking of the Temple of his body.* A human nature then he must have had, which might be subject to dissolution: but being once dissolved, he could not by his own strength (which was the thing here necessarily required) raise it up again; unless he had *declared himself to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead.* The *Manhood* could suffer, but not overcome the sharpness of death: the *Godhead* could suffer nothing, but overcome any thing. He therefore that was to suffer and to overcome death for us must be partaker of both natures: that *being put to death in the flesh*, he might be able also to *quicken himself by his own Spirit.* ABP. USHER.

When I say the Son of God became the Son of man, I do not mean as if by this he should cease to be what he was before, the Son of God; for he did not leave his Godhead to take upon him the manhood; but I believe he took the manhood into his Godhead; he did not put off the one to put on the other, but he put one upon the other. Neither do I believe that the human nature, when assumed into the divine, ceased to be human; but as the divine person so assumed the human nature as still to remain a divine person, so the human nature was so assumed into a divine person as still to remain a human nature. God therefore so became man, as to be both perfectly God and perfectly

man, united together in one person. I say, in one person; for if he should be God and man in distinct persons, this would avail me no more than if he should be God only and not man, or man only and not God; because the merit and value both of his active and passive obedience is grounded merely upon the union of the two natures in one and the same person. He, therefore, by his life and death merited so much for us, because the same person that so lived and died was God as well as man; and every action that he did, and every passion that he suffered, was done and suffered by him that was God as well as man. And hence it is that Christ, of all the persons in the world, is so fit, yea, only fit, to be my Redeemer, Mediator, and Surety, because he alone is both God and man in one person. If he was not man, he could not undertake that office; if he was not God, he could not perform it. If he was not man, he could not be capable of being bound for me; if he was not God, he would not be able to pay my debt. It was man by whom the covenant was broken, and therefore man must have suitable punishment laid upon him: it was God with whom it was broken, and therefore God must have sufficient satisfaction made unto him: and as for that satisfaction, it was man that had offended, and therefore man alone could make it suitable; it was God that was offended, and therefore God alone could make it sufficient.

The sum of all is this; man can suffer, but he cannot satisfy; God can satisfy, but he cannot suffer; but Christ, being both God and man, can both suffer and satisfy too; and so is perfectly fit both to suffer for man and to make satisfaction unto God, to reconcile God to man, and man to God. And thus, Christ having assumed my nature into his person, and so satisfied Divine justice for my sins, I am received into grace and favor again with the Most High God. BP. BEVERIDGE.

As indispensably necessary as it is to the assurance of our salvation, to know that Jesus Christ is over all, God blessed for ever; so needful is it likewise to our salvation, to know that Jesus Christ is very man, subject to the same infirmities as we are, sin only excepted. *He was tempted*, that none might say, This Sa-

viour, who is given unto us, is too far removed from us; he is inaccessible; his quality and condition is too far above us, that we should be able to approach him. In order to prevent any such idea, he descended into the lower parts of the earth, that we might not think him above our reach. Nor is he far off, being united to us by the most intimate bands of consanguinity. He dwelleth in our hearts by faith: there we experience him as our Brother, in all points tempted like as we are, and subject to the same infirmities, that he might sanctify ours, and change their nature. He needed not to be tempted on his own account; but it was necessary on ours, that we, as his members, might under all our temptations have part in his victory.

After forty days, he was an hungred: a plain proof of his being a true man. It is said of him, that he was thirsty, and was wearied with travelling; in a word, that he felt all the distresses of our nature. We ought not to pass lightly over such passages of holy writ, which are recorded as proofs of the real humanity of the Son of God; for we are not less concerned to know that Jesus Christ is very man, than we are to be assured that he is the true God. A true believer, reading with attention, that Jesus Christ was an hungred, will certainly perceive the enormity of sin, on the one hand, and the infinite mercy of God on the other; for what, but our sins, made him suffer hunger or thirst? Him, upon whom all creatures wait, that he may give them meat in due season, and thus fill them with good! He, the Source of life, from whom flow the streams of all blessing, has thirsted, that he might allay our thirst with streams of grace, and that the water he gives to us may become in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. In this sense, the hunger of Jesus Christ proves to us more than an exquisite repast, to refresh and comfort our needy souls. DURAND.

The Importance of this Doctrine.

IF it be indeed a truth that Jesus Christ is *God over all*, it is utterly impossible that it can be a truth of subordinate magnitude. The simple statement of it is enough to show that it must rank as a first principle;—an article of prime importance; a foundation-stone in the Temple of Truth: a star of the very first

magnitude in the hemisphere of Christian doctrine.—For my own part, I believe it to be even more than this; a kind of central Sun, around which the whole system of Christianity, in all its glory, and in all its harmony, revolves.

This view of its importance is confirmed, when we consider it, secondly, in its connexion with our most interesting and solemn duties: I mean the duties which we owe to the great object of supreme reverence, worship, and obedience.—If Jesus Christ be not God, then we, who offer to him that homage of our hearts which is due to God alone, are, without doubt, guilty of idolatry; as really guilty as the worshippers of the deified heroes of Greece or Rome. We are guilty, like them, of *changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*; and thus alienating the honors of him who hath declared, that he *will not give his glory to another*. This, surely, is no trifle.—But is it, on the other hand, a trifle,—is it fitted to excite no serious concern, no uneasy apprehension—to withhold divine honor from one to whom it is due? to divest of his supreme dignity, and to equalise with ourselves, puny worms of the dust, one whom angels and archangels adore, as *over all, God blessed for ever*?—Consequences of such magnitude, on both sides, certainly stamp with immense importance the inquiry on which we are now entering.

The same thing is manifest, thirdly, from the intimate relation which this doctrine bears to others.—It is an integral part of a system of truths, which stand or fall along with it. It is connected, for example, in the closest manner, with the purpose of Christ's appearance upon earth, and the great design of his sufferings and death; that is, with the vitally important doctrine of atonement:—this doctrine, again, is inseparably connected with the corruption of human nature, and the universal guilt of mankind; from which it is that the necessity of such atonement arises:—and this, in its turn, essentially affects the question respecting the true ground of a sinner's acceptance with God; the necessity of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit; the principle and motive of all acceptable obedience; and other points of similar consequence. It is very obvious, that two systems, of which the sen-

timents, on subjects such as these, are in direct opposition, cannot, with any propriety, be confounded together under one common name. That both should be Christianity, is impossible; else Christianity is a term which distinguishes nothing. Viewing the matter abstractly, and without affirming, for the present, what is truth and what is error, this, I think, I may with confidence affirm, that to call schemes so opposite in all their leading articles by a common appellation, is more absurd, than it would be to confound together those two irreconcilable theories of astronomy, of which the one places the earth, and the other the sun, in the centre of the planetary system.—They are, in truth, essentially different religions. For if opposite views as to the object of worship, the ground of hope for eternity, the rule of faith and duty, and the principles and motives of true obedience;—if opposite views as to these do not constitute different religions, we may, without much difficulty, discover some principle of union and identity amongst all religions whatever; we may realise the doctrine of Pope's Universal Prayer; and extend the right hand of fellowship to the worshippers at the Mosque, and to the votaries of Brama.

Such, then, is the importance, direct and relative, of this point of doctrine,—that Jesus Christ is truly God; that in his Person there subsisted, when he was on earth, an union of the divine and human nature.

REV. DR. WARDLAW.

Mediation of Christ.

WHEN we behold the camp of Israel in the wilderness, visited by the divine judgments; when we see some going down alive into the dreadful pit; others burnt up in a moment by fire from heaven; and a pestilence threatening to consume the rest; when we look around, and view, in every part of the picture, the dying and the dead; do we not at once acknowledge the original from which it is drawn, and discern in it the too, too faithful portrait of a fallen world, full of misery and death, because full of sin and rebellion!

But what? Must we then indeed perish? Must we all perish? *Will the Lord cast off for ever; and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gra-*

cious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Is the plague begun among the people, and is there no person who can stay it? O not so; blessed be our gracious God! there is yet hope of comfort, health, and salvation. Turn your eyes once more to the instructive picture, and there view the Intercessor making atonement, and saving the remnant of his people. Destruction was not the end for which God formed man. 'For God made not death. He created man to be immortal, and made him an image of his own eternity. Through envy of the devil came death into the world, and still, as at the first, they alone who hold of his side do find it.' The covenant of works being broken by transgression, the covenant of grace immediately succeeded in its room. This was the remedy provided against sin and death, and the blessed means of reconciliation fore-ordained by the divine Persons, before the foundation of the world; that the sinner, who had no righteousness of his own to plead in arrest of judgment upon the new terms of this act of grace, might again find acceptance and life, through the divine satisfaction and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was consecrated to be our High Priest, and ordained to perform an office, in attempting which every high priest taken from among men must else have failed. He had no need to offer sacrifice for his own sins, since he had none; but being himself all-righteous, was perfectly qualified to save others. Nor was his priesthood to pass from one to another, or to have an end, like that of Aaron; but it was eternal and unchangeable, as the Son of God who exercised it. Such was our High Priest, who perceived that, on account of man's transgression, wrath was gone forth from the presence of the Lord, and that the plague was begun among the people. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore he arrayed himself in the holy garments of glory and beauty; he put on a breast-plate of righteousness, and a robe of inviolable sanctity, and he was clad, over all, with zeal as a cloke. He was anointed with the oil of gladness, with the Holy Ghost, and with power; and on his head was a crown of salvation and glory. Thus adorned and fitted for the work, he put on, for incense, the merits of his sufferings. He ran into the

midst of God's people, as a mediator, interposing himself between the parties at variance, in order to reconcile them. He met the burning wrath, and turned it aside from all believers. He stood, and stands now, between the dead and the living, between those who, by opposing his method of salvation, will die in their sins, and those who, living and believing in him, shall never die eternally. He is at the right hand of God, ever making intercession for us. And so the plague is stayed. A stop is put to the progress of everlasting destruction. The fiery sword of offended justice cannot reach, nor shall the second death have any power over such as accept the atonement which he hath made for them, and thankfully receive the benefits of his all-prevailing intercession. *There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*

And can any thing, then, prevent our accepting this atonement, and thankfully receiving the benefits of this intercession? Can any thing induce us, when the bountiful hand of mercy hath filled and holdeth out the cup of salvation, to dash it untasted from us? Nothing can, but an utter ignorance of our sin and of our danger. Could a dying Israelite have been prevailed upon, think you, to reject the atonement and intercession of Aaron? No, surely. Only see how hope revives in their countenances, and joy sparkles in their eyes, all turned and fixed upon him in the execution of his priestly office. And why? Because they were sensible of their wretched and perilous estate. They needed not to be told, that they were expiring by the pestilence. They knew it, they felt it; they were looking wishfully around them for help and deliverance, ready with eagerness and impatience, with gratitude and thankfulness, to snatch at it, and embrace it, the moment it should appear. O why are not we so? Why do we hear of the atonement and intercession of the holy Jesus with so much cold indifference? Why, but because we see not, we know not, we feel not, the want of them? And yet what is there within us or without us that doth not teach and show it us? To tell you that the world is full of sorrow is no news; to tell you that the world is full of sin, is, I presume, no news. And from what would you desire to be delivered, if not from sin and sorrow? To tell you that a sentence of death is passed upon the bo-

dies of men, and that, without redemption, a sentence of condemnation will be passed upon their souls and bodies too, this likewise is no news to any one of you. Daily experience proves the first, and the Scripture asserts the second. And from what would you wish to be saved, if not from death and condemnation? Or what, in point of wretchedness and horror, was the camp of Israel with the pestilence in the midst of it, if compared to such a world as this? Go, thou who art tempted to reject, or to neglect, the satisfaction of Christ, go to the bed of sickness, and undraw the curtains of affliction; ask him who lies racked with pain, and trembling at the thoughts of the wrath to come, what his opinion is concerning the doctrine of atonement; and observe how the name of a Saviour and Intercessor puts comfort and gladness into his sorrowful and affrighted soul, at a time when the treasures and the crowns of eastern kings would be utterly contemned, as equally vain, worthless, and unprofitable, with the dust of the earth. Then reflect, that such, one day, must be thy state; and in that state, such infallibly will be thy thoughts and sensations. And did the cares and pleasures of the world suffer living men to think and feel as dying men do, the intercession of Christ would be regarded and accepted by Christians, as that of Aaron once was by Israel. Now, indeed, the sentiments of men on this great point may be different, because their passions and their prejudices are different: but we shall all think alike upon the subject, when passion shall cease, and prejudice be no more, at the hour of death, and in the Day of Judgment. In that last and concerning Day, the scene on which we have been meditating shall be again exhibited, in its most awful and tremendous accomplishment. Instead of the earthly pit opening its mouth to swallow up Korah and his company, the infernal pit of everlasting destruction shall disclose its bottomless depth, to receive alive into it the great adversary, and all that have taken part with him against God and Christ. Instead of fire from the presence of the Lord, to consume the two hundred and fifty that offered incense, *Behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, and leave them neither*

root nor branch. Instead of the pestilence to destroy fourteen thousand only of his murmuring people, the inexhaustible floods of almighty vengeance, heaped up for ages, shall be poured out, to drown rebellious spirits in irresistible perdition. Then, when the heavens shall melt with fervent heat all around, the fiery gulf rolling beneath, and the earth, upon which we stand, sinking down into the flames, then what a sight will it be, to behold our blessed Aaron, our great Mediator, standing up, and interposing his merits between the dead and the living; between those who, disbelieving, have murmured against him, and those who, believing, have served and obeyed him. Then tremble, thou wretch, who hast blasphemed, or slighted the intercession of Jesus. But rejoice greatly, O faithful soul, whose trust hath ever been in him; thy salvation is sure, and the day of thy redemption is come: rejoice, and shout aloud for joy; join the chorus of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, whom the well-beloved John heard, saying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* And with them let *every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them,* exalt their voices, and proclaim, *Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

BP. HORNE.

Necessity for the Mediation of Christ.

WHATEVER notions we may entertain of God and salvation, in the days of ease and health; or however we may pass away our lives in indulgence, or philosophical security, there comes a period when every man capable of reflection is made serious. The most inconsiderate, when the world fails them, when, from the recollection of their past lives, they feel they stand in need of some security from the consequences they have brought upon themselves, and of which they become apprehensive; they then are glad, in most instances, to lay hold of the idea of redemption, and feel the hopes of Christ's atonement very congenial to their sinking spirits, in the proportion that they

perceive that they can have no other ground for the expectation of pardon. It would be well if they would look out of, and beyond themselves for help, before the arrival of the trying decisive hour. It is not sending for the sacrament to be administered, or crying, Lord, Lord, at the last, that will insure to us an open door of mercy; but we may judge what our feelings will then be, by the solicitude which all express (who have any reason or conscience) at the approach of death. Who is the man that feels himself in a state in his own person, to come before God, with confidence? Does he feel no guilt, no fear, no misgivings?

On this subject I would appeal to the testimony left us by a most distinguished modern philosopher;* one who possessed great knowledge of the human heart, but unhappily was too little favorable to Christianity: yet viewing the approach of the close of life, he records feelings to which every heart must respond. In the third edition of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, second part, the author describes the real feelings of reflecting human nature. It will be recollected that he passed his life among philosophical unbelievers, and evidenced no disapprobation of their opinions: his judgment may, on that account, have the more weight in the argument. He says, "If we consult our natural sentiments (on the subjects of virtue and vice) we are even apt to fear, lest, before the holiness of God, vice should appear more worthy of punishment, than the weakness and imperfection of human virtue can ever seem to be of reward. Man, when about to appear before a Being of infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety of his own conduct. In the presence of his fellow creatures he may (even justly) elevate himself, and may often have reason to think highly of his own character and conduct, compared with the still greater imperfection of theirs: but the case is quite different, when about to appear before his infinite Creator. To such a Being, he fears that his littleness and weakness can scarce ever appear the proper object, either of esteem or reward; but he can easily conceive how the numberless violations of duty, of which he has been guilty, should

* Dr. Adam Smith.

render him the proper object of aversion and punishment; and he thinks he can see no reason why the divine indignation should not be let loose, without any restraint upon so vile an insect as he imagines himself to appear to be. If he should still hope for happiness, he suspects that he cannot demand it from the justice, but that he must intreat it from the mercy of God. Repentance, sorrow, humiliation, contrition, at the thought of his past conduct, seem upon this account, the sentiments which become him, and to be the only means which he has left of appeasing that wrath which he knows he has justly provoked. He even distrusts the efficacy of all these, and naturally fears, lest the wisdom of God should not, like the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to spare the crime by the most importunate lamentations of the criminal. Some other intercession, some other sacrifice, some other atonement he imagines must be made for him, beyond what he himself is capable of making, before the purity of Divine justice can be reconciled to his manifold offences. The doctrines of revelation coincide in every respect with these original anticipations of nature: and as they teach us how little we can depend upon the imperfection of our own virtue, so they shew us at the same time, that the most powerful intercession has been made, and that the most prevailing atonement has been paid, for our manifold transgressions and iniquities." **REV. DAVID BROWN.**

Christ as Mediator must be perfectly Holy.

HE that interposed as Mediator, must be perfectly holy; otherwise he had been liable to justice for his own sin; and guilty blood is impure and corrupt, apter to stain by its effusion and sprinkling, than to purge away sin. The apostle joins these two as inseparable; *He was manifested to take away our sin, and in him is no sin*, 1 John iii. 5. The priesthood under the law was imperfect, as for other reasons, so for the sins of the priests; Aaron, the first and chief of the Levitical order, was guilty of gross idolatry; so that reconciliation could not be obtained by their ministry: for how can one captive ransom another, or sin expiate sin? But our Mediator was absolutely innocent, without the least tincture of sin original or actual. He was conceived in a miracu-

lous manner, infinitely distant from all the impurities of the earth. That which is produced in an ordinary way, receives its propriety from second causes, and contracts the defilement that cleaves to the whole species. Whatever is born of *blood* and of *the will of the flesh*, that is formed of the substance of the flesh and by the sensual appetite, is defiled: but though he was formed of the substance of the virgin, yet it was by virtue of a heavenly principle, according to the words of the angel to her. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God*, Luke i. 35. He came in the appearance only of *sinful flesh*; as the brazen serpent had the figure, and not the poison, of the fiery serpent. He was without actual sin. He foiled the tempter in all his arts and methods wherewith he tried him. He resisted the lust of the flesh, by refusing to make the stones bread to assuage his hunger; and the lust of the eyes, in despising the kingdoms of the world with all their treasures; and the pride of life, when he would not throw himself down, that by the interposing of angels for his rescue, there might be a visible proof that he was the Son of God. The accuser himself confessed him to be the *Holy One of God*; he found no corruption within him, and could draw nothing out of him. Judas that betrayed him, and Pilate that condemned him, acknowledged his innocence. He perfectly fulfilled the law, and did always what pleased his Father. In the midst of his sufferings, no irregular motion disturbed his soul, but he always expressed the highest reverence to God and unspeakable charity to men. He was compared, for his passion and his patience, to a lamb, that quietly dies at the foot of the altar.

Besides, we may consider in our Mediator not only a perfect freedom from sin, but an impossibility that he should be touched by it. The angelical nature was liable to folly; but the human nature, by its intimate and unchangeable union with the divine, is established above all possibility of falling. The Deity is holiness itself, and, by its personal presence, is a greater preservative from sin, than either the vision of God in heaven, or the most permanent habit of grace. Our Saviour

tells us, *the Son can do nothing of himself, but according to the pattern the Father sets him*, John v. 19.

Now the perfect holiness of our Redeemer hath a special efficacy in making his death to be the expiation of sin, as the Scripture frequently declares; *For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*, Heb. vii. 26. *And he that knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. *We are redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 18. *And By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many*, Isa. liii. 11.

DR. BATES.

Christ as Man perfectly Holy.

THE obedience of Christ was of all other the most *free* and *voluntary* service of his Father, if we consider it with respect unto his own most holy, and therefore most undistracted and unhindered will; for, if it were not voluntary, it were no obedience. And yet, notwithstanding, it was most *certain* and *infallible*, if we consider it with respect to the sanctity of his nature, to the unmeasurableness of his unction, to the plenitude of his unseducible and unerring spirit, to the mystery of his hypostatical union, and the communication of properties between his natures, whereby whatever action was done by him might justly be called the action of God,—in which regard it was *impossible* for him to sin. In like manner, the passive obedience of Christ was most *free* and *voluntary*, as it respected his own will; for he troubled himself, he humbled and emptied himself, he laid down his own life, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: and yet, thus it was written, and thus it behoved (or was *necessary* for) Christ to suffer, if we consider the pre-terminate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, who had so ordained, Acts iv. 28.

BP. REYNOLDS.

Natural Religion judging between Christ and Mahomet.

LET us consider briefly, what alteration has happened since the coming of Christ, to disturb and unsettle our judgments in this great affair. A man, perhaps, who is a great reader, may be able to produce

many instances of impostors since that time, and imagine that they are all so many dead weights upon the cause of revelation. But what is become of them, and their doctrine? they are vanished, and their place is not to be found. What pretence is there then to set up these revelations? Is God grown so weak and impotent, that we may suppose these to be his revelations, and intended for the use of the world, had he not been baffled at first setting out? If God intends a law for the use of the world, he is obliged, if I may use the expression, to publish the law to the world; and therefore want of such publication evidently shews that God was not concerned in them; or at least did not intend that we should be concerned in them: and therefore it is absurd to instance such pretences as difficulties in our way, which in truth are not in our way at all.

And thus the case of revelation stood, and the Gospel had no competitor, till the great and successful impostor Mahomet arose: he indeed pretends a commission to all the world, and found means sufficiently to publish his pretences. He asserts his authority upon the strength of revelation, and endeavours to transfer the advantages of the Gospel evidence to himself, having that pattern before him to copy after: and, should we say that the Alcoran was never promulged to us by persons duly commissioned, it may be answered perhaps, that the Alcoran is as well published to us as the Gospel is to them; which has some appearance of an answer, though the fact is indeed otherwise; for even the Alcoran owns Jesus for a true prophet.

But with respect to this instance, I persuade myself it can be no very distracting study to find reasons to determine our choice. Go to your natural religion: lay before her Mahomet and his disciples arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands and tens of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword: shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements, shew her the prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives; let her see his adultery, and hear him allege revelation and his divine commission to justify his lust and his oppression.

When she is tired with this prospect, then shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and the perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies: let her follow him to the Mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured, but not provoked: let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross; and let her view him in the agony of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*

When natural religion has viewed both, ask, Which is the prophet of God? But her answer we have already had; when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross; by him she spoke and said, *Truly this man was the Son of God.* BP. SHERLOCK.

An Infidel's Confession of the sublime Character of Jesus Christ.

I WILL confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the Scripture! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man loaded with all the shame of guilt (yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue), he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance was so striking, that all the Fathers perceived it.

What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them! Socrates dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was anything more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say therefore what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas had given up his life for his country, before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people, before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only hath given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigoted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honour to the vilest people on earth.

The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophising with his friend, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for: that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonising pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God.

Shall we suppose the Evangelic History a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the mora-

lity contained in the gospel, the marks of whose truths are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.

ROUSSEAU.

The Mystery of Redemption.

THE death of Jesus Christ is a mystery inaccessible to reason, but which all the difficulties that reason can muster, are unable to impair.

It is a mystery inaccessible to reason. Let it explain to me that wonderful union of greatness and depression, of ignominy and glory, of an immortal God with a dying man.

Let reason explain to me, how it comes to pass, that though God is unsusceptible of suffering and dying, the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ should, however, derive all their efficacy from his nature as God.

Let reason explain to me, how Jesus Christ could satisfy divine justice, and be, at the same time, if the expression be lawful, the Judge and the party condemned, the Avenger and the party avenged, he who satisfied, and he to whom satisfaction was made.

Let reason explain to me, how Jesus, nailed to the cross, is nevertheless worthy of the adoration of men and of angels, so that the Jew who crucifies him, is at once his executioner and his creature.

Let reason explain to me, above all, that mystery of love which we see displayed on the cross of Jesus Christ, and how God, who is so great, and so highly exalted, should have vouchsafed to perform, in behalf of man, a being so low and contemptible, wonders so astonishing. Bend, bend, proud Reason, under the weight of these difficulties, and from the extent of these mysteries, learn the narrowness of thy own empire.

It is the wisdom of God in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew, 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8. It is the great mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. iii. 16. These are the things of the Spirit of God, which the natural man receiveth not, 1 Cor. ii. 14. This is the stumbling-block of the Jew: this is to the Greek foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 23. These are the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, 1 Cor. ii. 9. This is a mystery inaccessible to reason; but it is a mystery,

whose truth and importance all the difficulties which reason can muster, are unable to impair.

The gospel tells us not that greatness and depression, that ignominy and glory, that the mortal, and the immortal Nature, were confounded in the person of Jesus Christ. It simply informs us that God, in the depths of his infinite wisdom, knew how to unite depression to greatness, glory to ignominy, the mortal to the immortal Nature. This is a mystery inaccessible to reason, but against which reason has no title to murmur.

The gospel does not tell us that God, who is unsusceptible of either suffering or death, suffered and died, but that the subject susceptible of suffering, united to the impassible, suffered; that the mortal, united to the immortal subject, died; and that, in virtue of this union, his sufferings and death possess an infinite value. This is a mystery inaccessible to reason, but against which reason has no title to repine.

The gospel does not tell us that Jesus Christ, considered as nailed to a cross, as suffering, as dying, is worthy of adoration, but, in virtue of his intimate union with Deity, that he is an object of adoration to men and to angels. This is a mystery inaccessible to reason, but against it reason has not a title to reclaim.

The gospel does not tell us that man, a being so mean, vile, grovelling, could have merited this prodigy of love; but that God has derived it from himself, as an independent source, and that he considers it as essential to his glory, to acknowledge no other foundation of his benefits, but the misery of those to whom he is pleased to communicate them. This is a misery inaccessible to reason, but against which reason has not a title to reclaim.

SAURIN.

The Account which the New Testament gives of our Redemption by Christ.

THIS is the account which the New Testament gives of the redemption wrought for us by Christ: 'That his death was a satisfaction made to the divine justice for the sins of mankind;' 'That through faith in him we are assured of the forgiveness of our sins upon our repentance and amendment;' 'That being forgiven, we are justified in the sight of God;' 'That being justified in his sight, we are recon-

ciled to him;' 'That he who reconciles us to God, sanctifies our hearts by the Holy Spirit, to enable us to perform the will of God, and thereby to continue in his favour;' 'That for the same end he mediates and intercedes for us with God, while we continue in this present life;' and, 'That through him we have the promise of life eternal.' This is a scene full of comfort to all those who comply with the terms of the gospel; and, that good Christians may be assured that this is the true account, and that by consequence the hope and comfort they build upon the redemption wrought for them by Christ, and their trust in him, are well founded; I will give them in one view, and in the words of Scripture, what is plainly delivered there, upon each of the fore-mentioned heads.

1. Christ, by his death, made Satisfaction to the Divine Justice for the sins of mankind. This the Scripture sets forth by the expressions, 'of dying for us,' 'of bearing our sins,' 'of taking away our sins,' 'of being a propitiation for our sins,' 'of purchasing and redeeming or ransoming us with the price of his blood.'

By 'dying for us' *he laid down his life for us*, 1 John iii. 16; *he died for our sins*, 1 Cor. xv. 3; *he gave himself for us*, Tit. ii. 14; *he was delivered for our offences*, Rom. iv. 25; *he tasted death for every man*, Heb. ii. 9. Agreeably to the prophecy concerning him, *he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities*, Isa. liii. 5.

By 'bearing our sins:' *he was once offered to bear the sins of many*, Heb. ix. 28; *he bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Agreeably to the prophecies concerning him, *he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows*, Isa. liii. 4; *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*, Isa. liii. 6.

By 'taking away our sins:' *he was manifested to take away our sins*, 1 John iii. 5; *he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, Heb. ix. 26; *he hath washed us from our sins in his own blood*, Rev. i. 5; *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 John i. 7.

By 'being a Propitiation for our sins:' *him God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 25; *God sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins*, 1 John iv. 10; *he is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours*

only, but also for the sins of the whole world, 1 John ii. 2.

By 'purchasing and redeeming or ransoming us with the price of his blood:' *he purchased the Church of God with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28; *he came to give his life a ransom for many*, Matt. xx. 28; *he gave himself a ransom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6; *we are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. vi. 20; *in him we have redemption through his blood*, Eph. i. 7; *he hath redeemed us to God by his blood*, Rev. v. 9; *we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 19.

2. The Divine Justice being satisfied, we are assured of the forgiveness of our sins through Christ upon a sincere repentance. His forerunner, John the Baptist, preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Christ tells us, *his blood was shed for many for the remission of sins*, Matt. xxvi. 28. After the resurrection, the apostles are directed by him *to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations*, Luke xxiv. 47. Accordingly, their preaching was this: *Him God hath exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins*, Acts v. 31; *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*, Acts ii. 38; *Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins*, Acts xiii. 8; *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*, Acts x. 43; *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19; *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*, Eph. i. 7. And we are commanded *to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us*, Eph. iv. 32.

3. Our sins being forgiven, we are justified by Christ in the sight of God. *By him all that believe are justified*, Acts xiii. 39; *we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. vi. 11; *we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24; *being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*, Rom. v. 9. *God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. *Even the righteousness of*

God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, Rom. iii. 22.

4 Being justified by Christ, we are reconciled to God. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. v. 1. We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. v. 10. Us, who were enemies, hath Christ reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, 1 Cor. i. 21, 22. He hath made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, Col. i. 20. God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. v. 18. Who suffered for sin, that he might bring us unto God, 1 Pet. iii. 18. And, we are accepted in the Beloved, Eph. i. 6.*

5. Having reconciled us to God, he sanctifies our hearts by the Holy Spirit, to enable us to perform our duty, and thereby to continue in God's favor. *We are chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, 2 Thess. ii. 13. And through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, 1 Pet. i. 2. We are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, Heb. x. 10. God hath not called us to uncleanness but unto holiness, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit, 1 Thes. iv. 7, 8. The Spirit of God dwelleth in us, Rom. viii. 9.; and our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19.; and we are an habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and quickened by the Spirit, Tit. iii. 5. and strengthened, John vi. 63. with might by the Spirit in the inner man, Eph. iii. 16. And it is through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body, by which deeds, Rom. viii. 13. we grieve and quench the Spirit, Eph. iv. 30. 1 Thes. v. 19.*

6. He who assists us by his Spirit upon earth, to enable us to do the will of God, and thereby to continue in his favor, is our constant mediator, intercessor, and advocate with God in heaven, to present our prayers for the supply of our wants, and to obtain a compassionate regard to our failings and infirmities, Luke xi. 13. *He is the mediator of the new covenant, Heb. xii. 24. There is one mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. ii. 5. He makes intercession for us at the right hand of God, Rom. viii. 34. He appears in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 24. No man cometh unto the*

Father but by him, John xiv. 6. He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find grace and mercy to help in time of need, 1 John ii. 1. Heb. iv. 15, 16.; and let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. In him we have boldness, and access with confidence, Heb. x. 22. Eph. iii. 12.

7. As it is he, who enables us to do the will of God and to preserve his favor in this life, so it is *through him* that we are made partakers of life eternal: *The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, John iv. 14.; to seek and to save that which was lost, Luke xix. 10.; that we might live through him, that the world through him might be saved, 1 John iv. 9.; that believing, we might have life through his name, John xx. 31.; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 16. Through him we are saved from wrath, John iii. 17. He hath delivered us from the wrath to come, 1 Thes. i. 10. Rom. v. 9. Eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 23. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John v. 11.; who is the Captain of our salvation, Heb. ii. 10.; the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, Heb. v. 9. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, Acts iv. 12.*

BP. GIBSON.

The great Work, Price, and Glory of Redemption.

THIS should teach us, 'to have most high and honorable thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is thus all-sufficient to save.' Omnipotency, though it were but to destroy us, were justly the object of our dread and reverence; but omnipotency to save, deserves our most affectionate esteem. It should raise wonder in us, when we consider God's power and goodness in the works of creation; but when we contemplate the work of Redemption, it should raise our wonder to an ecstasy. Christ's almighty power was not so glo-

rious then when he spake the world out of nothing, then when he lifted up the sun into the firmament, and kindled the stars as so many shining torches that dart forth light upon the world, and extend their influences to the whole universe, as when he appeared in flesh, despised, and of no account, in the form of a servant, to accomplish the wonderful work of our redemption. What he did in the former, was by the association and joint-workmanship of the other Persons of the blessed Trinity, but in this the whole work lay upon him. *He trod the winepress of his Father's wrath alone.* In the former, though he showed his power to be great, yet he did not put it forth to the uttermost; he could have created more worlds, and he might have made more of each sort of creatures, and these far more beautiful and glorious than they are; but in the work of redemption Christ's infinite power is extended to the uttermost, his person was infinite, and his sufferings were infinite, one proportionable to the other. His omnipotency as our Redeemer, is far more glorious than his omnipotency as our Creator. Christ first gives the honor of his all-sufficiency to this end, that for his undertaking so great an employment as the accomplishment of the work of our redemption, we might honor him in his own person, as we honor the Father in his, John v. 26. Certainly there is good reason why we should ascribe honor to him from whom we receive salvation.

BR. HOPKINS.

We shall not disparage you, O ye blessed angels and archangels of heaven, if we shall say, ye are not able to look into the bottom of this divine love, wherewith *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* None, Oh, none can comprehend this mercy, but he that wrought it.

Lord, what a transcendent, what an infinite love is this! What an object was this for thee to love! a world of sinners! impotent, wretched creatures, that had despised thee; that had no motive for thy favor but deformity, misery, professed enmity! It had been mercy enough in thee, that thou didst not damn the world; but that thou shouldst love it, is more than mercy. It was thy great goodness to forbear the acts of just vengeance to the sinful world of man; but to give unto it

tokens of thy love, is a favor beyond all expression. The least gift from thee had been more than the world could hope for; but that thou shouldst give thine only begotten Son, the Son of thy love, the Son of thine essence, thy co-equal, co-eternal Son, who was more than ten thousand worlds, to redeem this one forlorn world of sinners, is love above all comprehension of men and angels. What diminution had it been to thee and thine essential glory, O thou great God of heaven, that the souls that sinned should have died and perished everlastingly? yet so infinite was thy loving mercy, that thou wouldest rather give thine only Son out of thy bosom, than that there should not be a redemption for believers.

And thou, O blessed Jesu, wast accordingly willing, for our sakes, to submit thyself to nakedness, hunger, thirst, weariness, temptation, contempt, betraying, agonies, scorn, buffetings, scourgings, distention, crucifixion, death. O love, above measure, without example, beyond admiration! *Greater love, thou sayest, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;* but O what is it then, that thou, who wert God and man, shouldst lay down thy life, more precious than many worlds, for thine enemies!

Yet had it been but the laying down of a life in a fair and gentle way, there might have been some mitigation of the sorrow of a dissolution; but thine, O dear Saviour, was the painful, shameful, cursed death of the cross; wherein yet all that man could do unto thee was nothing to that inward torment, which, in our stead, thou enduredst from thy Father's wrath; when, in the bitterness of thine anguished soul, thou criest out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Even thus, thus wast thou content to be forsaken, that we wretched sinners might be received to mercy. O love, stronger than death which thou vanquishedst! more high than that hell is deep, from which thou hast rescued us!

BR. HALL.

But here what a ransom was necessary! what a price was required! what a price was paid! suited to the dignity of the offended, and the indignity of the offence. Nothing short of this could have effected the purchase; and when nothing else could appear of equal value but his own infinite and eternal person, *Christ gave himself for us.*

Had he ransacked all the stores of nature, the treasures of secret places, this might have purchased the kingdom, but not redeemed one immortal soul from death. Had he given all the world of inanimate nature, and devoted it to destruction, the tribute of the righteous justice of God, in this he might have appeared glorious, but the value had not been equal to the redemption of one soul. Had he given all the generations of men to have saved one, they were all justly forfeited already; and the sacrifice would have shown, in a most tremendous manner, the severity of his justice, but could never have prevailed for the benefit of that one soul, or its deliverance from death. Had all the heavenly hosts been sacrificed for the race of man, here would have been an astonishing gift, most amazing love, most fearful justice; but still no atonement could have been made thereby for the sin of man. He who created had a right to destroy, till his own truth and faithfulness were pledged for preservation; no merit, therefore, could have hence arisen to claim the pardon, the deliverance, the salvation of man.

Behold, then, a gift infinitely beyond; a gift upon which there could be no claim, either of God or man; a sacrifice, the offering of which was infinitely meritorious, suitable to the demands of immutable and infinite justice. This implies that he knew well the nature of his undertaking from the beginning, when, in his amazing love, he engaged for the arduous work; and, therefore, through every step we admire the consistency of his heart, the riches of his grace. Of what an infinite value is the price of our redemption! The very offer implies an ability which could belong to none but the eternal God; such obligation already rested upon every creature as to render them unequal to the task; not God, not Christ, can give a greater gift; but all in heaven and earth can never equal this. The Lord of universal nature, by whom all things were created, and in whom all things exist, *He gave himself!* The Son of God gave himself into human nature, that he might be like his brethren whom he purposed to redeem. He gave himself to be made under the law, that he might be obedient to the law for man. He gave himself to the temptations of the enemy, that he might overcome for us. He

gave himself to bear all our infirmities and our sorrows, that he might remove them from his people. He gave himself to all the conflicts and agony of the garden, to sweat great drops of blood, and drink the bitter cup of Divine indignation, that he might deliver us from the wrath to come. He gave himself into the hands of the cruel mob; to the indignation of rulers, scribes, and priests; into the power of the Roman deputy, to be suspended on the cross, and there *He gave his life*, the ransom of our souls. *I lay down* (says he) *my life for the sheep: I lay down my life, that I might take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again*, John x. 11. 15. 17. 18. When seized by the insulting band, falsely accused, approved as innocent by his judge himself, and yet condemned, scourged, and insulted, he bears his cross on his agonising body, with the still deeper weight of our guilt upon his soul; till, suspended on the accursed tree, he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and appears as one under the curse, while justice exacts the last mite of satisfaction. He who voluntarily undertook, voluntarily submits and resolutely endures, till he could say, *It is finished*; and then he gave up the ghost, and voluntarily resigned his breath.

What was this whole scene of suffering, but the submission of the Redeemer, by his sustaining the actual punishment of our sins? there *he became sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 1 Cor. v. 21. There *it pleased the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief, when he made his soul an offering for sin*, Isa. liii. 10: there the precious blood was shed, which, as it closed and consummated the scene of his suffering, is generally spoken of as the price of redemption. *We are redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; precious in the sight of God for its infinite value; precious to the conscience of the convicted sinner for its purifying virtue; precious to the heart of every believer for the all-sufficient and everlasting blessings which are obtained by it; precious to all around the throne, who are there alone through its virtue, and because they have washed their robes

in this blood of the Lamb;—and to it the whole company of the redeemed shall ascribe the whole glory and praise throughout eternity. REV. W. GOODE.

The Lord hath done marvellous things, Ps. xcvi. 1. The works of God, I own, both in nature and in the economy of the law, are great and admirable; but the works of grace are incomparably more so. In nature he created a world which must perish; that which he made by grace is eternal. The first was formed out of nothing, which although indifferent as to the form that the Creator would give it, had at least no repugnancy to receive it; the latter, on the contrary, was produced from a refractory matter, already furnished with a form quite contrary to that, which Jesus Christ hath given it. In nature, he created man of the dust of the ground; in grace, he forms him of the incorruptible seed of his word. There, he crowneth a righteous creature with his goodness; here, he justifieth the ungodly, and redeemeth the guilty. There, he nourisheth an innocent creature with the fruits of the earth; here, he feedeth a criminal with the dainties of heaven, with his own flesh and blood. To render Paradise fertile, he watered it with a gentle rain only; but, in order to bring forth our life, he was obliged to sprinkle our earth with his blood. There, the wood of a tree bore the immortality of man; but the fruit of our immortality could be gathered from that tree only on which our Saviour suffered.

To purchase our salvation he was obliged to change the laws of nature, and to do things, which even the understanding of angels could never have conceived. God is made man, *like unto us in all things, sin only excepted*; the Eternal is born: the Infinite encloseth all his glory in a human body; the Invisible is seen by our eyes, and handled with our hands; he joineth in one Person time and eternity, the Creator and the creature, dominion and servitude. Oh, wonderful and incomprehensible union! The Father of eternity is born this day; the King of glory is lying in a manger; He, whom the universe cannot contain, is wrapped in swaddling clothes! This is the beginning only of our admiration; that he should be placed in the lap of Mary, and in the manger at Bethlehem, is far less astonishing, than that he should be crowned with thorns, and nailed to the cross on Mount

Calvary. And what can be conceived more incredible than this great mystery, that the God of the universe was crucified between two thieves? that Life tasted death? *The Lord hath done marvellous things*, such as neither nature nor the law ever experienced. J. DAILLE.

The Sufferings of Christ.

The Evangelists have in such language expressed his agony, as cannot but raise in us the highest admiration at the bitterness of that passion. *He began to be sorrowful*, saith Saint Matthew: *He began to be sore amazed*, saith St. Mark; *and to be very heavy*, say both: and yet these words in our translation come far short of the original expression, which render him suddenly, upon a present and immediate apprehension, possessed with fear, horror, and amazement, encompassed with grief, and overwhelmed with sorrow, pressed down with consternation and dejection of mind, tormented with anxiety and disquietude of spirit.

This he first expressed to his disciples, saying, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful*; and lest they should not fully apprehend the excess, adding, *even unto death*; as if the pangs of death had already encompassed him, and, as the Psalmist speaks, the pains of hell had got hold upon him. He went but a little farther before he expressed the same to his Father, falling on his face and praying, *even with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death*, Heb. v. 7. Nor were his cries or tears sufficient evidences of his inward sufferings, nor could the sorrows of his breast be poured forth either at his lips or eyes; the innumerable pores of his body must give a passage to all more lively representations of the bitter anguish of his soul; and therefore while he prayed more earnestly, in that agony *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*. As the Psalmist had before declared; *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels*, Psal. xxii. 14. The heart of our Saviour was as it were melted with fear and astonishment, and all the parts of his body at the same time inflamed with anguish and agony; well then might that melting produce a sweat, and that inflamed and rarified blood force a passage through the numerous pores.

And as the Evangelist's expressions, so

the occasion of the grief, will manifest the height and bitterness thereof. For God laid on his own Son *the iniquities of us all*, and as we are obliged to be sorry for our particular sins, so was he grieved for the sins of us all. If then we consider the perfection and latitude of his knowledge, he understood all the sins of men for which he suffered, all the evil and the guilt, all the offence against the Majesty, and ingratitude against the goodness of God, which was contained in all those sins. If we look upon his absolute conformity to the will of God, he was inflamed with most ardent love, he was most zealous of his glory, and most studious to preserve that right which was so highly violated by those sins. If we look upon his relation to the sons of men, he loved them all far more than any did themselves, he knew those sins were of themselves sufficient to bring eternal destruction on their souls and bodies, he considered them whom he so much loved as lying under the wrath of God whom he so truly worshipped. If we reflect upon those graces which were without measure diffused through his soul, and caused him with the greatest habitual detestation to abhor all sin, if we consider all these circumstances, we cannot wonder at that grief and sorrow. For if the true contrition of one single sinner, bleeding under the sting of the law only for his own iniquities, all which notwithstanding he knoweth not, cannot be performed without great bitterness of sorrow and remorse; what bounds can we set unto that grief, what measures to that anguish, which proceedeth from a full apprehension of all the transgressions of so many millions of sinners?

BP. PEARSON.

Crucifixion was (as most sharp and afflictive, so) most vile and shameful; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and unworthy of a free man, however nocent and guilty. It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon free men, but upon slaves only; that is, upon people scarcely regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves. And among the Jews that execution which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it, (for their law did not allow any so inhuman punishment), hanging up the dead bodies of some that had been put to death, was held most infamous and execrable: for,

Cursed, said the law, *is every one that hangeth upon a tree*; cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and malediction: *accursed by God*, saith the Hebrew; that is, seeming to be rejected by God, and by his special order exposed to affliction.

Indeed, according to the course of things, to be set on high, and for continuance of time to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth infuse bad suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt and scorn, doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despite, and detestation; especially from the inconsiderate, hard-hearted, and rude vulgar, which commonly doth think, speak and deal according to event and appearance. Whence, *to be made a gazing-stock*, or an object of reproach to the multitude, is by the apostle mentioned as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians. And thus in extremity did it befall our Lord: for we read that the people did in that condition mock, jeer, and revile him; abusing him by scurrilous gestures, letting out their virulent and wanton tongues against him; so as to verify that prediction, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people: all they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him*.

The same persons who formerly had admired his glorious works, who had been ravished with his excellent discourses, who had followed and favored him so earnestly, who had blessed and magnified him, (*for he*, saith St. Luke, *taught in the synagogues, being glorified by all*), even those very persons did then behold him with pitiless contempt and despite. In correspondence to that prophecy, *they look and stare upon me—the people stood gazing on him*, in a most scornful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful reproaches; as we see reported in the evangelical story.

Thus did our blessed Saviour *endure the cross, despising the shame. Despising the shame*, that is, not simply disregarding it, or (with a stoical haughtiness, with a cynical immodesty, with a stupid carelessness) slighting it as no evil; but not eschewing it, or not rating it for so great an evil, that to decline it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs.

There is innate to man an aversion,

and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain: whence *cruel mockings and scourgings* are coupled as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful martyrs. And generally men with more readiness will embrace, with more contentedness will endure the cruelty of the latter, than of the former; pain not so smartly affecting the lower sense, as being insolently contemned doth grate upon the fancy, and wound even the mind itself. For, *the wounds of infamy do* (as the wise man telleth us) *go down into the innermost parts of the belly*, reaching the very heart, and touching the soul to the quick.

We therefore need not doubt, but that our Saviour as a man, endowed with human passions, was sensible of this natural evil; and that such indignities did add somewhat of loathsomeness to his cup of affliction; especially considering, that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so indecently, so unworthily, so unjustly toward him: yet in consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of the *joy that was set before him*, when he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, he most willingly did accept, and most gladly did comport with it. He became a curse for us, exposed to malediction and reviling; He endured the contradiction (or obloquy) of sinful men: He was despised, rejected and disesteemed of men: He in common apprehension was deserted by God according to that of the prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; himself even seeming to concur in that opinion. So was he made a curse for us, that we, as the apostle teacheth, might be redeemed from the curse of the law; that is, that we might be freed from the exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the law, with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before the world attending it. He chose thus to make himself of no reputation, vouchsating to be dealt with as a wretched slave, and a wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted, not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy which we had merited; that together with our life, our safety, our liberty, we might even recover that honor which we had forfeited and embezzled.

But lest any should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferances of

our Lord, as not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like; lest any should presume to compare them with afflictions incident to other persons, as Celsus did compare them with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; it is requisite to consider some remarkable particulars about them.

We may then consider, that not only the infinite dignity of his person, and the perfect innocence of his life did enhance the price of his sufferings; but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances adhering to his design, did much augment their force.

He was not only, according to the frame and temper of human nature, sensibly touched with the pain, the shame, the whole combination of disasters apparently waiting on his Passion; as God (when he did insert sense and passion into our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend we should be, and as other men in like circumstances would have been; but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate: so that no man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did, no man ever hath been sensible of any thing comparable to what he did endure; that passage being truly applicable to him, *Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*; as that unparalleled sweating out great lumps of blood may argue; and as the terms expressing his resentments do intimate. For, in respect of present evils, he said of himself, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful to death*; he is said to be in great anguish and anxiety, to be in an agony or pang of sorrow. In regard to mischiefs which he saw coming on, he is said to be disturbed in spirit, and to be sore amazed, or dismayed at them. To such an exceeding height did the sense of incumbent evils, and the prospect of impendent calamities, the apprehension of his case, together with a reflexion on our condition, screw up his affections.

And no wonder that such a burden, even the weight of all the sins (the numberless most heinous sins and abominations) that ever were committed by mankind, by appropriation of them to himself, lying on his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, or seem to crouch and groan under it; that in the mystical psalm, applied by the apostle to him, he should cry out, *Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine ini-*

quities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart faileth me. The sight of God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin, might well astonish and terrify him: to stand, as it were, before the mouth of hell belching fire and brimstone in his face; to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance; to quench with his own heart-blood the wrath of heaven, and the infernal fire, (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves,) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of affliction. When such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, whom he so dearly and perfectly loved) did hide his face from him, did frown on him, how could he otherwise than be mightily troubled? Is it strange that so hearty a love, so tender a pity, contemplating our sinfulness, and experimenting our wretchedness, should be deeply touched? To see, I say, so plainly, to feel so thoroughly the horrible blindness, the folly, the infidelity, the imbecility, the ingratitude, the incorrigibility, the strange perverseness, perfidiousness, malice and cruelty of mankind in so many instances, (in the treason of Judas, in the denial of Peter, in the desertion of all the apostles, in the spite and rage of the persecutors, in the falsehood of the witnesses, in the abuses of the people, in the compliance of Pilate, in a general conspiracy of friends and foes to sin,) all these surrounding him, all invading him, all discharging themselves upon him; would it not astone a mind so pure? would it not wound a heart so tender and full of charity?

Surely, any of those persons who fondly do pretend unto, or vainly do glory in a sullen apathy, or a stubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected. The most resolved philosopher would have been dashed into confusion at the sight, would have been crushed into desperation under the sense of those evils which did assault him.

With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution did conspire to increase his sufferings. For surely, as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable; so accordingly would the impressions upon him be most sensible, and conse-

quently the pains which he felt (in body or soul) most afflictive.

That we in like cases are not alike moved; that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our danger and our misery, doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those matters; or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous as they really are in themselves and in their consequences;) or because we have but weak persuasions about them; or because we do but slightly consider them; or from that our hearts are very hard and callous, our affections very cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside gross material affairs) can mollify or melt them; or for that we have in us small love to God, and a slender regard to our own welfare; in fine, for that in spiritual matters we are neither so wise, so sober, so serious, nor so good or ingenuous, in any reasonable measure, as we should be. But our Saviour in all those respects was otherwise disposed. He most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man, most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his mind: He most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew, whatever God's law had declared about them: He did exactly consider and weigh them: His heart was most soft and sensible, His affections were most quick and excitable by their due objects: He was full of dutiful love to God, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will towards us. Whence it is not so marvellous that as a man, as a transcendently wise and good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences, that his imagination was so troubled, and his passions so stirred by them; so that he thence did suffer in a manner, and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies, *Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, Κριστέ, By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us!*

DR. BARROW.

Necessity for both the Active and Passive Obedience of Christ.

THE Son, assuming our nature into his Deity, became subject and obedient both

to the moral and ceremonial laws of his Father, and at last to death itself, *even the death of the cross*. In the one he paid an active, in the other a passive obedience; and so did not only fulfil the will of his Father in obeying what he had commanded, but satisfied his justice in suffering the punishment due to us for the transgressing of it. His active obedience, as it was infinitely pure and perfect, did without doubt infinitely transcend all the obedience of the sons of men, even of Adam too in his primitive state; for the obedience of Adam, make the best of it, was but the obedience of a finite creature, whereas the obedience of Christ was the obedience of one that was infinite God, as well as man. By which means the laws of God had higher obedience performed to them, than themselves in their primitive institution required; for being made only to finite creatures, they could command no more than the obedience of finite creatures, whereas the obedience of Christ was the obedience of one who was the infinite Creator, as well as a finite creature.

Now this obedience being more than Christ was bound to, and only performed upon the account of those whose nature he had assumed, as we by faith lay hold upon it, so God through grace imputes it to us, as if it had been performed by us in our own persons. And hence it is, that as in one place Christ is said to be *made sin for us*, so in another place he is said to be *made unto us righteousness*. And in the fore-cited place, 2 Cor. v. 21. as he is said to be made *sin for us*, so we are said to be *made righteousness* in him: but what righteousness? Our own? No, *the righteousness of God*, radically his, but imputatively ours: and this is the only way whereby we are said to be *made the righteousness of God*, even by the righteousness of Christ being made ours, by which we are accounted and reputed as righteous before God.

These things considered, I very much wonder how any man can presume to exclude the active obedience of Christ from our justification before God; as if what Christ did in the flesh was only of duty, not at all of merit; or as if it was for himself, and not for us; especially when I consider, that suffering the penalty is not what the law primarily requireth; for the law of God requires perfect obedience, the penalty being only threatened to, not properly required of, the breakers of it.

For, let a man suffer the penalty of the law in never so high a manner, he is not therefore accounted obedient to it; his punishment doth not speak his innocence, but rather his transgression of the law.

Hence it is that I cannot look upon Christ as having made full satisfaction to God's justice for me, unless he had performed the obedience I owe to God's laws, as well as borne the punishment that is due to my sins: for, though he should have borne my sins, I cannot see how that could denominate me righteous or obedient to the law, so as to entitle me to eternal life, according to the tenor of the old law, *Do this and live*: which old covenant is not disannulled or abrogated by the covenant of grace, but rather established, especially as to the obedience it requires from us in order to the life it promiseth; otherwise the laws of God would be mutable, and so come short of the laws of the very Medes and Persians, which altered not. Obedience therefore is as strictly required under the New as it was under the Old Testament, but with this difference—there, obedience in our own persons was required as absolutely necessary; here, obedience in our Surety is accepted as completely sufficient.

But now if we have no such obedience in our Surety, as we cannot have if he did not live as well as die for us, let any one tell me what title he hath or can have to eternal life? I suppose he will tell me he hath none in himself, because he hath not performed perfect obedience to the law; and I tell him he hath none in Christ, unless Christ performed that obedience for him, which none can say he did, that doth not believe his active as well as passive obedience to be wholly upon our account.

And now I speak of Christ's being our Surety, as the apostle calls him, methinks this gives much light to the truth in hand; or what is a surety, but one that undertakes to pay whatsoever he, whose surety he is, is bound to pay, in case the debtor prove non-solvent or unable to pay it himself? And thus is Christ, under the notion of a surety, bound to pay whatever we owe to God, because we ourselves are not able to pay it in our own persons.

Now there are two things that we owe to God, which this our Surety is bound to pay for us, namely, first and principally, obedience to his laws as he is our Creator

and Governor, and, secondly, by consequence, the punishment that is annexed to the breach of these laws, of which we are guilty. Now, though Christ should pay the latter part of our debt for us by bearing the punishment that is due unto us, yet if he did not pay the former and principal part of it too, that is, perform the obedience which we owe to God, he would not fully have performed the office of suretyship which he undertook for us, and so would be but a half-mediator or half-saviour; which are such words, as I dare scarce pronounce for fear of blasphemy.

So that, though it is the death of Christ by which I believe my sins are pardoned, yet it is the life of Christ by which I believe my person is accepted. His passions God accounts as suffered by me, and therefore I shall not die for sin; his obedience God accounts as performed by me, and therefore I shall live with him. Not as if I believed that Christ so performed obedience for me, that I should be discharged from my duty to him; but only that I should not be condemned by God in not discharging my duty to him in so strict a manner as is required. I believe the active obedience of Christ will stand me in no stead, unless I endeavor after sincere obedience in mine own person; his active as well as his passive obedience being imputed unto none, but only to such as apply it to themselves by faith; which faith in Christ will certainly put such as are possessed of it upon obedience unto God. This, therefore, is the righteousness, and the manner of that justification, whereby I hope to stand before the judgment-seat of God, even by God's imputing my sins to Christ and Christ's righteousness to me; looking upon me as one not to be punished for my sins, because Christ hath suffered, but to be received into the joys of glory, because Christ hath performed obedience for me, and does by faith, through grace, impute it to me.

BP. BEVERIDGE.

That this righteousness of Christ, thus made ours, may serve to all ends and purposes for which we stand in need of a righteousness, it is necessary, that both his active righteousness, or his righteousness of obedience, and also his passive righteousness, the righteousness of his satisfaction in suffering for us, be made

ours; and imputed to us for our justification.

Though this position be much controverted; yet possibly, the truth of it will appear from the grounds formerly laid, viz. that there are two ends, for which we stand in need of a righteousness: the one, is a freeing of us from the penalty threatened; the other, is an entitling of us to the reward promised. Now had we no other but the righteousness of Christ's satisfaction made over unto us, this indeed would perfectly free us from our liability to punishment; for if our Surety hath undergone it for us, we ourselves are not liable: but, still, we should need a righteousness to entitle us to the reward; and that must necessarily be a righteousness of perfect obedience. For, as I noted before, it is not said, 'Suffer this, and live:' but 'Do this, and live:' and, consequently, it must be obedience and not suffering, the active and not the passive righteousness of Christ, that can give us a right unto eternal life. It is true, the satisfaction of Christ doth give a right unto eternal life concomitantly, but not formally; that is, wherever guilt is removed, there a title to heaven is procured: yet the formal reason of our title to heaven is different from the formal reason of the remission of our sins: this results from the imputation of Christ's sufferings; that, or his obedience. BR. HOPKINS.

In order to justification before God, it is as necessary that the active, as that the passive, obedience of Christ be imputed. It is *by the obedience of One that many are made righteous*, Rom. v. 19.; and it is *the righteousness of One, which is imputed to many for justification of life*. The satisfactory sufferings and death of Christ, are indeed the ground, of a believing sinner's deliverance from the penalty or curse of the law; the ground, of the pardon of all his past breaches of it. But this alone, would leave him still under the law in its covenant form, for the time to come; so that every new breach of it would render him liable anew to eternal death. It is requisite therefore that he have, in addition to the former, a righteousness comprising perfect conformity of nature and of life to the preceptive part of the law; to be the ground of his deliverance from it as a covenant, for the time to come. Such a righteousness he needs, as is answerable to the

law's demand of perfect holiness of nature, and perfect obedience of life, the original and unalterable conditions of eternal life. As it is by the satisfactory sufferings and death of Christ,* that he obtains deliverance from condemnation to eternal death; so, *it is by the meritorious obedience of Christ, that he obtains a title to eternal life*, Rom. v. 18. 21. And yet these two are but one undivided righteousness, to be relied on, for one undivided salvation, from eternal death to eternal life. Now if this whole righteousness of Christ be not imputed to a believing sinner, how can he, in the sight of God, be made righteous, and that as the thief on the cross was, in a moment? If a man has no perfect righteousness from himself, he must then have it from another; and from whom can he have it, but from Jesus Christ, who is 'Jehovah our Righteousness'?† If it is not a righteousness *within* the believer, rendering him inherently and absolutely perfect, it must be a righteousness *upon* him, by being imputed to him. If it is imputed, as the Scripture affirms it to be, (Rom. iv. throughout,) it must be such a righteousness as his case requires; such a righteousness as will not only secure him from eternal death, but entitle him to everlasting life. Let this then comfort thee, believer, amidst all thy perplexities and distresses, all thy doubts and fears. Thou hast a righteousness imputed to thee, which is infinitely perfect, infinitely meritorious of life eternal. Arrayed in this spotless robe, interested in this divinely excellent, this transcendently glorious righteousness, thou hast an undoubted, an unbounded title, to all the grace and glory promised in the eternal covenant. O rely on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which can never fail thee: and in a little thou shalt sit down among

the blessed above, and eternally shout forth the praises of that dear Lord Jesus, who not only redeemed thee from sin and misery, but exalted thee to a throne of glory above the angels in heaven. Then, thou wilt be astonished at the languor and coldness of the warmest heart that ever contemplated Jesus here below; and with joy ineffable be surprised to find that not the half, nor the thousandth part respecting him, and his righteousness, could in this world be told thee.

DR. COLQUHOUN.

Expostulation with the Sinner upon the Sufferings and Humiliation of Christ.

IT was for thy sake that the Judge did suffer unspeakable pains, such as were sufficient to reconcile all the world to God. And to consider that thou hast, for thine own particular, made all this in vain, and ineffective; that Christ thy Lord and Judge should be tormented for nothing; that thou wouldest not accept felicity and pardon, when he purchased them at so dear a price; it must needs be an infinite condemnation to thee. How shalt thou look upon him that fainted and died for love of thee, and thou didst scorn his miraculous mercies? How shalt thou dare to behold that holy face which brought salvation to thee, and thou didst turn away, and fall in love with death, and deformity, and sin? And yet in the beholding that face consists much of the glories of eternity. Surely all the pains and the passions, the sorrows and the groans, the humility and poverty, the labours, and the watchings, the prayers and the sermons, the miracles and the prophecies, the whip and the nails, the death and the burial, the shame and the smart, the cross and the grave of Jesus, shall be laid upon thy score, if thou hast refused the mercies and design of all their holy ends and purposes. And if thou rememberest what a calamity that was, which broke the Jewish nation in pieces, when Christ came to judge them for their murdering him, who was their king, and the prince of life; and considerest, that this was but a dark image of the terrors of the day of judgment, thou mayest then apprehend, that there is some strange unspeakable evil in store for one who refuses the salvation of Jesus, and rather chooses that Satan should rejoice in his destruction, than that Jesus should triumph in his felicity.

BR. TAYLOR.

* Suffering for punishment, gives a right and title to nothing, only satisfies for something; nor doth it deserve any reward: it is no where said, 'Suffer this and live,' but 'Do this and live.' OWEN on Justification, p. (mili) 464.

† To show, that this divinely excellent righteousness of Jehovah the incarnate Son is imputed to believers, and is meritorious of life to them, it is in Scripture styled,—'The righteousness of God;' Rom. i. 17. 'The righteousness which is of [or, from] God;' Phil. iii. 9. 'The righteousness by faith;' Rom. iii. 22. 'The righteousness of the faith;' Rom. iv. 11. 'Righteousness without the law;' Rom. iii. 21. 'Righteousness without works;' Rom. iv. 6. Righteousness 'by the obedience of One;' Rom. v. 19. 'Righteousness not our own;' Phil. iii. 9. and 'righteousness imputed by God;' Rom. iv. 6, 10. 22. 24.

His Blood be on us, and on our Children.

His blood be on us, and on our children, Matt. xxvii. 25. This was the imprecation of those barbarous Jews, who with importunity demanded the death of Jesus Christ, and glutted themselves with his sufferings. But it was, in a far different sense, the interior voice of those believing souls, who entered into the design of God, who, by faith, sprinkled themselves with this blood, which was to form the bond of union between heaven and earth.

His blood be on us, and on our children. This is the voice which now resounds from ear to ear, and which must be accomplished on this assembly, in one sense or another. Yes, this blood shall be upon you, in vengeance and malediction, as it was upon ungrateful Jerusalem, in your families to trouble their peace, in your plans to defeat them, in your establishments to sap them to the foundation, in your consciences to harrow them up, in your death-bed to darken it with horror and despair, and through all the periods of eternity demanding the expiation of the crime, of having trampled under foot the blood of the Son of God, and of having crucified afresh the Lord of glory. Or it will be upon you, yes, this blood will be upon you, to strengthen you under all your infirmities, to preserve you in the hour of temptation, to console you under the pressure of calamity, to speak peace to the troubled conscience, to support you in dying agony, to render your death blessed, and eternity triumphant. SAURIN.

The Offence of the Cross.

THE poverty and meanness in which our Saviour appeared, was the earliest, and may probably be the latest, objection to the gospel. He came from God, to convert and to save the world, to declare the purposes and the commands of the Almighty, and to exact obedience from every creature; but he came with less attendance and show than if he had been an ordinary messenger from the governor of a province. Hence it is, that we so often find him upbraided either with the meanness of his parentage, the obscurity of his country, or the present necessity of his circumstances: *Is not this the carpenter's son?* says one; *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* says another; *or any prophet out of Galilee?* says a third. And when they saw him oppressed with sufferings, and weighed

down with afflictions, they openly insulted his sorrow, and triumphed over his fond pretences to save the world: *Thou, say they, that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.* And so blinded are men with the notions of worldly greatness, and so apt to conceive of the majesty of God according to their own ideas of power and dignity, that this prejudice has prevailed in every age. The apostle to the Corinthians preached Christ crucified; but he was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness: for the Jews required a sign, a visible temporal deliverance, and had no notion, much less any want, that they could apprehend, of such a Saviour as Jesus. The Greeks sought after wisdom; and thought, that if God were indeed to redeem the world, he would act more suitably to his power and wisdom. Whenever they made their Jupiter speak, his voice was thunder, and lightning was his appearance, and he delivered oracles not to be communicated to vulgar ears. So in the Old Testament, when God speaks, clouds and darkness are round about him, and his presence and his voice are terrible. But here every thing had a different turn: the appearance was in the likeness of a man, and in the form of a servant; and as he came in like a servant, he went out like a slave: *he was esteemed stricken, and his departure was taken for misery.* His doctrine was framed rather to purify the heart, and to give wisdom to the simple, than to exercise the head and furnish matter for the curious and learned; to be a general instruction, and a common rule of life to all men, and not to satisfy the vanity of worldly wisdom in inquiries above its reach. With him the precepts of virtue are the principles of wisdom, and holiness the greatest ornament of the mind of man.

But these things the wise and the great men of the world find hard to reconcile with the wisdom and majesty of God, according to their notions of wisdom and power. Why did not Christ, say they, appear in the power and majesty of his Father? Would not the embassy have been more worthy both of God and of him? Would any prince who had a mind to reclaim his rebellious subjects to obedience, not rather choose to send a person of honor with a suitable retinue, whose appearance might command respect

and credit, than an ambassador clothed in rags and poverty, fit only to create in the rebels a greater contempt both of himself and his prince? If it was the purpose of God, that the world through faith should be saved, would not the world more securely and readily have confided in one whose very appearance would have spoke his dignity, than in one who seemed to be even more miserable than themselves, and not able to rescue himself from the vilest and most contemptible death?

But let us now, in the second place, consider what foundation there is in reason for this great prejudice.

It is no wonder to hear men reason upon the notions and ideas which are familiar to them. Great power and great authority are connected with the ideas of great pomp and splendor; and, when we talk of the works of God, our minds naturally turn themselves to view the great and miraculous works of Providence: and this is the reason why men are slow to discern the hand of God in the ordinary course of nature, where things being familiar to us, do not strike with wonder and admiration.

When Naaman the Syrian came to the prophet of Israel to be cured of his leprosy, Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, *Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean.* The haughty Syrian disdained the easy cure, and scorned the prophet: *Is this your man of God, and this his mighty power, to send me to a pitiful river of Israel? Behold,* says he, *I thought he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?* So he turned and went away in a rage. But his servants, not a little wiser than their master, thus reason the case with him: *My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith unto thee, Wash and be clean?* Upon this gentle rebuke his stomach came down, and he condescended to follow the prophet's direction; *and his flesh came again like the flesh of a young child, and he was clean.* Not unlike to Naaman's folly is theirs, who take offence at the poverty and meanness of the Author

of our Redemption. His sentiments and theirs agree: he expected to have seen some surprising wonder wrought for his cure; and when he was bid only to wash, he thought there could be nothing of God in so trifling a remedy. And is not this their sense, who think that so obscure, so mean a person as Jesus, could never be the messenger of God upon so great an errand as the salvation of the world? who thus expostulate; Why came he not in a majesty suitable to his employment, and then we would have believed him? but how can we expect to be raised to the glory of God by him, who was himself the scorn and contempt of men?

If we search this prejudice to the bottom, we shall find that it arises from a false conception of the power and majesty of God, as if the success of his purposes depended upon the visible fitness of the instruments he made choice of. With men we know the case is so; they must use means which they can judge to be adapted to the end they aim at, if they intend to prosper in what they undertake: but with God it is otherwise. To stop the current even of the smallest river, banks must be raised, and sluices cut, when the work is done by man: but in the hand of God, the rod of Moses was more than sufficient to curb the rage of the sea, and force it to yield a passage to his people. *The foolishness of God,* says the apostle, *is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men:* teaching us, that we should not presume to sit in judgment upon the methods of Providence; since, how foolish or how weak soever they may seem to us, they will be found in his hand to be the wisest and the strongest. And this reasoning the apostle applies to the case now before us: *The cross of Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto all them which are called, the power of God, and the wisdom of God; because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men.* However the Jews, or however the Greeks conceived of the crucified Jesus, yet to every believer he is the mighty power of God to salvation, because God ordained him so to be; and this ordination gives full efficacy to the cross of Christ, however in itself contemptible, and to all human appearance unfit for the purpose. The waters of Jordan had no natural efficacy to cleanse a leper: in the rod of Moses there

was no power to divide the sea : but when ordained by God to these purposes, the sea fled back at the touch of Moses's rod, and the leprosy of Naaman was purged by the so much despised waters of Israel. If we would judge truly, the more simple and plain the methods of Providence are, the more do they speak the power of the Almighty. When God said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, his uncontrollable power more evidently appeared, than if all the angels of heaven had been employed to produce it. When our Lord said, *I will, be thou clean*, and the person was cleansed, his Divinity shone forth more brightly than if he had commanded all the powers above visibly to assist him. So likewise, when God committed the redemption of the world to Jesus, a man of sorrow and affliction, and of no form or comeliness, and gave him the power of doing such works as never man did, in confirmation of his commission, he appeared as plainly in him as if he had clothed him with visible majesty and power. If we consider him afflicted and tormented, and given up to a cruel death, it proves indeed that he was weak and mortal ; but still God is strong, and not the less able to establish the word which he spoke by this weak, this mortal man.

As to this part of the offence then, so far as the majesty and power of God are concerned, it proceeds from very wrong notions in both cases, and supposes that the majesty of God wants the same little supports of outward pomp and grandeur as that of men does, and that his power depends upon the fitness of instrumental or material causes, as human power plainly does ; whereas the majesty and power of God are never more clearly seen, than when he makes choice of the *weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty*.

Let us then, in the next place, consider, with respect to men, whether the advantages on their side would have been greater, had Christ appeared in greater splendor, and with more visible power and authority.

How far the imaginations of some men may rove upon such inquiries as these, or what degrees of splendor and glory they would judge sufficient for their purpose, I cannot tell : this we are sure of, that the majesty of the Almighty is not to be approached by human eyes ; that therefore, whenever it descends to treat with men,

it must be veiled and obscured under such representations as men can bear. This is true, you will say ; but is there no medium between the immediate presence of God and his appearing in the form of a servant, and dying, not as the children of men commonly die, but as the vilest and most profligate criminal ? Many degrees there are, no doubt, of visible glory, in any of which Christ might have appeared, but in none with greater advantage to religion than that in which he came. Suppose he had come, as the Jews expected, in the form of a mighty prince, and in that situation had propagated his faith and doctrine, what would the unbelievers then have said ? how often should we have been told before now, that our religion was the work of human policy, and that our prince's doctrine and dominions were extended by the same sword ? Was ever any religion the better thought of for having been preached at the head of an army ? This is certain, that to make religion a rational act of the mind, it cannot be conveyed to us in too easy and familiar a manner : the less awe we have of our teacher, the more freedom we shall exercise in weighing and examining his doctrines. And upon this account, our Saviour's appearance was in the most proper form, as it gave to men the greatest scope and liberty of trying and searching into his doctrines and pretences ; and therefore his meanness and poverty should least of all be objected by those who seem to contend for nothing more than to clear religion from fears and prejudices.

But perhaps they will say, We wanted him not to appear in worldly state and glory, or to exercise temporal dominion on earth : we would have been contented with a visible, though an inferior kind of manifestation of his divine authority. *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written !* What think ye of giving sight to the blind ; of opening the ears of the deaf ; of loosening the tongue that was dumb ; of restoring health to the sick ; of raising the dead to life again ; of raising even himself from the grave, and abolishing the scandal of the cross by a visible victory and triumph over death ! What do you call these things ? what do they manifest to you ? Are these the works of that mean man, that wretched, that crucified mortal, of whom we have been speaking ? Do slaves and servants say, do princes and the greatest *riched* children of men, use to perfe And if

works? If not, these are the very manifestations of divine power and authority which you require. Nor can it, I believe, enter into the heart of man to contrive any greater signs to ask of any person pretending to a divine commission, than these which our Saviour daily and publicly gave the world of his authority. Had he appeared with all the visible power and glory which you can conceive, yet still you cannot imagine what greater works than these he could possibly perform: and therefore the evidence now, under all the meanness of his appearance, is the same for his divine authority and commission, as it would have been, had he come in the greatest pomp of glory and power.

As to us, I think, who are removed at a distance from the scene of this action, the evidence is much greater. Had he come in surprising glory, we might have suspected the relations of men, who, we might well think, saw and heard every thing under the greatest astonishment, and, like St. Paul, when he was caught up to the third heavens, could hardly tell whether they were in the body, or out of the body; but now we have the evidence of men who lived and conversed with him familiarly, who saw all his mighty works, and saw them without surprise or astonishment, being reconciled to them by daily use, and the long-experienced gentleness and love of their Master; and therefore they very justly introduce their accounts with this assurance, That they relate that only *which they had heard, which they had seen with their eyes, which they had looked upon, and which their hands had handled of the Word of life.* So far are we then from having any just cause of offence in the poverty and meanness of our blessed Lord, that from those circumstances arises the great stability of our faith, and this comfortable assurance, that our faith standeth not in the words or in the works of man's wisdom and power, but in the power and in the wisdom of the Almighty, who knows how to produce strength out of weakness.

BR. SHERLOCK.

I know the sufferings of Christ were, by the *wise of the world*, made the great objection against the wisdom of this dispensation; the *cross of Christ was to the flesh-eyes foolishness*; and yet the wisest child, who had determined otherwise in general, though not in this particular case, at the point of the second book of his common-

wealth) saith, 'That if a man may be a perfect pattern of justice and righteousness, and be approved by God and men, he must be stripped of all the things of this world; he must be poor and disgraced, and be accounted a wicked and unjust man, he must be whipped, and tormented, and crucified as a malefactor;' which is, as it were, a prophetic description of our Saviour's sufferings. And Arrian, in his epistle, describing a man fit to reform the world, whom he calls 'the apostle, the messenger, the preacher, and minister of God, saith, he must be without house and harbour, and worldly accommodations; must be armed with such patience for the greatest sufferings, as if he were a stone, and devoid of sense; he must be a spectacle of misery and contempt to the world.' So that by the acknowledgment of these two wise heathens, there was nothing in the sufferings of Christ that was unbecoming the wisdom of God, and improper to the end and design of Christ's coming into the world; besides, that they served a further end, which they did not dream of, *the satisfying of divine justice.*

ABP. TILLOTSON.

The Glory of the Cross.

UNLIKELY doctrine to a carnal mind: that there should be more of God's glory manifested to us in the face of Christ crucified, than in the face of heaven and earth; the face of Christ, in which sense discovers nothing but marks of pain and disgrace; that blotted, mangled visage, red with gore, covered with marks of scorn, swelled with strokes, and pale with death; that would be the last object in which the carnal mind would seek to see the glory of the God of life; a visage clouded with the horror of death; it would with more pleasure and admiration, view the same face when transfigured, and shining like the sun in its strength. Divine glory shone indeed then in a bright manner in that face on the mount; but not so brightly, as on mount Calvary: this was the more glorious transfiguration of the two. Though all the light in the world in the sun and stars, were collected together into one stupendous mass of light, it would be but darkness to the glory of this seemingly dark and melancholy object: for it is here, as the apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. iii. 18., *we all as with open face may behold the glory of God.*

Here shines spotless justice, incomprehensible wisdom, and infinite love all at once; none of them darkens or eclipses the other, every one of them gives a lustre to the rest. They mingle their beams, and shine with united eternal splendor: The just Judge, the merciful Father, and the wise Governor. No other object gives such a display of all these perfections, yea all the objects we know, give not such a display of any one of them. No where does justice appear so awful, mercy so amiable, or wisdom so profound.

REV. J. MACLAURIN.

The rich Consolation afforded by the Mystery of the Cross.

WHAT sources of consolation are opened in these mysterious truths! Where is there a spring of comfort to man, which does not rise from a doctrine surrounded in some view with impenetrable darkness? Whence any peace of conscience but from the mysterious sacrifice of the cross? Whence the disposition and power to repent and seek God, but from the mysterious influences of the Spirit? Whence the softest consolations of the heart in trouble, but from the mysterious communion of God with the soul? And what is there so consolatory as that incarnation of the Son of God, which is shrouded with the deepest darkness? It is in this mystery that are involved the condescension and pity of the Almighty. It is here that the invisible God becomes tangible, as it were, and perceptible to man. It is here, that the distance and dread which sin has interposed, are removed.

In short, the one stupendous act of the love of God in the gift of his Son, which is the distinguishing truth of Christianity, is so incomparably consoling, and at the same time so humiliating, as to form, from this united impression, the strongest evidence of its divine glory and excellency. It is here the restorative character of revealed truth rises to the highest point—that all is shown to be summed up in an exhibition of divine love—that every thing else is seen to be only preparatory to this, or consequent upon it. This is the epitome of the Christian doctrines. Redemption is the manifestation of the character of love in the ever-blessed God. The incarnation is, so to speak, Love itself made Man; whilst the operations of the Holy Ghost are a diffusion of the same divine love.

How does this consideration raise these internal evidences (of Christianity!) how

does it invest them with a matchless excellency! how does it render the very mysteries which result from the infinite condescension of God, in taking our nature upon him, a part of the proof of their divine origin! how do the very depths of darkness, with which we feel ourselves surrounded in certain points of view, enhance the consolation which flows in a full tide upon the soul, from the practical effects and tendencies of the doctrines which arise from them, and which guide and illuminate our path! REV. D. WILSON.

Christ is the Only Saviour of Sinners, and the Only Foundation upon which we can build.

I do not only believe Christ to be my Saviour, but I believe only Christ to be my Saviour. It was he alone that trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath, filled with the sour and bitter grapes of my sins. It was he that carried on the great work of my salvation, being himself both the Author and the Finisher of it. I say, it was he, and he alone; for what person or persons in the world could do it besides himself? The angels could not if they would; the devils would not if they could; and as for my fellow-creatures, I may as well satisfy for their sins as they for mine; and how little able, even the best of us are to do either, that is, to atone either for our own transgressions or those of others, every man's experience will sufficiently inform him. For how should we, poor worms of the earth, ever hope by the slime and mortar, if I may so speak, of our own natural abilities, to raise up a tower, whose top may reach to heaven? Can we expect by the strength of our own hands to take heaven by violence; or by the price of our works to purchase eternal glory? It is a matter of admiration to me, how any one that pretends to the use of his reason can imagine, that he should be accepted before God for what comes from himself! For how is it possible that I should be justified by good works, when I can do no good works at all before I be first justified? My works cannot be accepted as good till my person be so; nor can my person be accepted by God, till first ingrafted into Christ; before which ingrafting into the true vine, it is impossible I should bring forth good fruit; for *the ploughing of the wicked is sin*, says Solomon; yea, *the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord*. And if

both the civil and spiritual actions of the wicked be sin, which of all their actions shall have the honor to justify them before God? I know not how it is with others, but, for my own part, I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I ever prayed in all my life-time with that reverence, or heard with that attention, or received the Sacrament with that faith, or did any other work whatsoever with that pure heart and single eye, as I ought to have done. Insomuch that I look upon all my *righteousness but as filthy rags*; and it is in the robes only of the righteousness of the Son of God that I dare appear before the Majesty of heaven. BP. BEVERIDGE.

St. Paul says, that whoever would successfully labor for the edification of the Church, must build on that foundation which he had laid among the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. *Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* What is properly the foundation we have in God our Saviour? Is it this only, that he is the author of our salvation, and that we by our own works should afterwards finish it? Or hath he paved the way only for us, and having led us into it, does he leave us to our own industry and strength to continue in it? Certainly not! but our ground is, to know and to believe that he is made unto us righteousness. No one, therefore, can be truly grounded in Christ Jesus, except he has found his complete righteousness in him alone; for the apostle says not, that he was given to us, to assist us in obtaining righteousness; but that *he of God is made unto us righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30.

By his death he hath delivered us from the condemnation of eternal death. In him we have been adopted by the heavenly Father to be his children and heirs. By his blood we are reconciled unto God. Protected and governed by him, we can never perish. Being actually incorporated in him, and received into God's kingdom, we are already made partakers of eternal life.

He is the Foundation of our salvation: in ourselves we are foolish and ignorant, but, by our fellowship with him, he is our light, and our wisdom; by nature we are impure, but he is our sanctification; we are weak and helpless to resist the devil, but he, unto whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, is our strength. We carry about us a body of death; but he is

our Life. In a word, he is the ground on which we stand, because all that he hath is ours; we have nothing in ourselves, but in him we have all things. . . .

Since our salvation is comprised entirely, and in all its parts, in Jesus Christ, let us be careful of transferring the least part of it to any other. Do we seek salvation? the very name of Jesus teaches us, that we have it in him. Do we want redemption? we obtain it through his sufferings and death. Are we afraid of the curse? his death on the cross secures us from it. In his offering we find the satisfaction made, of which we stand in need, and in his blood, the cleansing from our sins. Since the treasures of all good things are hid in him, we ought to receive them of his fullness alone, and thus enjoy the participation of them, without looking for any other source. Such as are not satisfied with him, and build their hopes upon this or the other thing, are highly criminal; and though they principally have their eyes directed towards him, yet they do in fact deviate from the straight way, by leading their thoughts partly to another object.

CALVIN.

The ground-work of all a Christian's hope and consolation is, that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and Saviour of the world, one able to save to the utmost all that put their trust in him, so that every soul that finds itself lost, and not able to subsist nor abide the judgment of God, may repose their confidence in him, and lay the weight of their eternal welfare upon his death and sufferings, with assurance to find rest and peace in him to their souls. He is such a one as faith may triumph in, over the world, and all things beside. A believer may triumph in his victory, and in the faith of his victory, over hell and death, and the grave; may overcome personally, *for this is our victory over the world, even our faith.* And how could a soul conquer by faith, if he in whom it believes were not declared to be the Son of God with power? There is nothing so mean and weakly as faith in itself, it is a poor despicable thing of itself, and that it sees, and that it acknowledges. Yea, faith is a very act of self-denial, it is a renouncing of all help without and within itself, save only that which is laid on Christ Jesus; therefore it were the most unsuitable mean of prevailing, and the most insufficient weapon for gaining the

victory, if the object of it were not the strong God, the Lord Almighty, from whom it derives and borrows all its power and virtue, either to pacify the conscience, or to expiate sin, or to overcome the world. Oh consider, Christians, where the foundation of your hopes is situated. Is it in the divine power of our Saviour? If he who declared so much love and good-will to sinners, by becoming so low, and suffering so much, have also all power in heaven and earth, if he be not only man near us, to make for us boldness of access, but God near God, to prevail effectually with God, then certainly he is *a sure foundation laid in Zion, elect and precious*; he is an unmoveable Rock of Ages, whosoever trusts his soul to him shall not be ashamed. I am sure that many of you consider not this, that Christ Jesus, who was in due time born of the Virgin Mary, and died for sinners, is the eternal Son of God, equal to his Father in all glory and power. Oh how would this make the gospel a great mystery to souls, and the redemption of souls a precious and wonderful work, if it were considered! Would not souls stand at this anchor immovable in temptation, if their faith were pitched on this sure foundation, and their hope cast upon this solid ground! O know your Redeemer is strong and mighty, and none can pluck you out of his hand, and himself will cast none out that comes. If the multitude of you believed this, you would not make so little account of the gospel that comes to you, and make so little of your sins which beloved to be taken away by the blood of God, and could be expiated by no other propitiation; you would not think it so easy to satisfy God with some words of custom, and some public services of form as you do; you would not for all the world deal with God alone without this Mediator: And being convinced of sin (if you believed this solidly, that he in whom forgiveness of sin and salvation is preached, is the same Lord God whom you hear in the Old Testament, who gave out the law, and inspired the prophets, the only begotten of the Father in a way infinitely removed from all created capacities) you could not but find the Father well satisfied in him, and find a sufficient ransom in his death and doings to pacify God, and to settle your consciences.

PROF. BINNING.

But that which is the chief excellency of our state is, that we not only depend upon the Word as revealing Jesus Christ, but by so doing we depend upon Jesus Christ as revealed in the Word: we are built upon that foundation, of which Jesus Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone, not Jesus Christ's Word. He is the Foundation of his Church in his own Person, and not by his Word only which he spake. He is Himself the chief corner-stone: he not only declared the way of God in truth, but was himself the way and the truth. In this capacity he stands alone, and bears up the pile of the spiritual building by his own strength.

Jesus Christ is the elect and precious corner-stone which God hath laid in Zion: though he is one which the builders rejected, he is laid for this purpose, that every trembling sinner who feels his own weakness and inability to stand alone before God, either on the score of merit or innate holiness, may come to it, and let all the weight of his salvation rest entirely upon it. He is permitted to depend upon the merits of Christ for his pardon and acceptance with God, and may expect to find in him all necessary grace and strength. *He that believeth in him shall not be confounded.* To him many have come, for he is a tried stone, and are builded together; and find him to be, not only the ground for their security, but also, as the corner-stone is in a building, the bond of their union.

But though it is contained in the Scriptures that *other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. iii. 11; that is, no foundation on which we can safely be built except him: yet mankind are ever rearing their respective superstructures on a different foundation: some build upon the presumptuous hopes of God's mercy; expecting to see the Lord without holiness; others are raising a fair fabric on the ground of their own righteousness: others are pleasing themselves with a motley building, which they have raised on two foundations, Christ and their own works: all which may stand for a while, and make a fair show during the momentary calm of God's forbearance; but will instantly crumble into dust, when his breath shall blow upon them. Now where so many are wrong and so few are right, how happy your lot to be in the latter number, by

having found the true foundation! How great your privilege, who have been taught to perceive that stone to be precious, which to others is *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient*; 1 Pet. ii. 8. REV. H. MARTYN.

God is only to be found in Christ.

As soon as we think of prying into the Godhead, our senses immediately fail us. Christ is set forth before our eyes as the living and express image of the invisible God. Why then should we vainly endeavour to fathom the mysteries of the Godhead, seeing that God provided for our infirmities, by showing himself near to us in the person of Jesus Christ? Let us rather, whenever the question relates to the government of the world, to the state of mankind, and the protection of heaven for our salvation, learn to fix our eyes on Christ Jesus alone, as in reality all power is given unto him. In his face we clearly see God the Father, who, without this, would be hidden and far from us.

Whoever honoreth not the Son, deprives God of that honor which of right belongs to him. Every man confesses, indeed, that God ought to be honored; nay, this natural, and as it were innate sentiment is so deeply rooted in our hearts, that no man dares openly to deny God the honor that is due to him. When men, however, seek God, out of the right way, their understanding leaves them. We shall not find the true God any where, but in Christ; nor can we show him that honor, which belongs to him, but *by kissing the Son*, Ps. ii. 12. *For, whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father*, 1 John ii. 23. Indeed, whenever the name of God is separated from Christ, it is in imagination only. Hence, let him, who is desirous of serving the true God acceptably, in no wise turn away from Jesus Christ. Since the Father hath made him to sit at his right hand, whoever imagines God without Christ, takes from him one half of himself. As soon as we separate our thoughts from Christ, we shall have idols of our own forming only; but in Jesus Christ there is nothing but what is divine, and which keeps us in fellowship with God. CALVIN.

When thou art in hand with the Article of Justification, and considerest or dis-

putest with thyself, where that God is to be found which justifieth sinners, and receiveth them to grace: then look well to it, and take good heed, that thou takest notice of no other God, but only of that man, Christ Jesus: look that thou takest sure hold on him, and with thy heart remainest depending on him, and banish and expel from thee all cogitations and speculations of God's incomprehensible majesty; for, as Solomon saith, *He that searcheth after high things, to him they shall be too high*, Prov. xxv. This which I now speak I have by good experience, and I know that the same is true. But the seducing spirits that will deal with God without this man Christ, they believe me not, although Christ himself saith, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father, but through Me*. Therefore whosoever thou art, thou shalt find no other way to go to the Father without this Way, which is Christ; all other ways are misleading, and by-ways; thou shalt find no truth without Christ, but altogether hypocrisy and lies: thou shalt find no life without Christ, but everlasting death: therefore mark diligently that in any case—(if thou intendest to be justified before God, and wilt obtain grace, and when thou dealest with the Devil, with the Law, with Sin, and Death)—then, I say once again, look well that thou knowest no other God, but only that God which is also Man. LUTHER.

Jesus Christ, having by his blessed incarnation, united the divine and human nature, has thus tempered the infinite majesty of God, which rendered him inaccessible to man, and placed him at so great a distance from us, as to prevent all communion with him. For what communion can there be between that Being, and dust; between the source of life, and death; between the Father of Spirits, and wretched flesh, which is but dust and ashes!

What condescension can be conceived equal to this, that God, who in his nature is so infinitely above us, hath vouchsafed not only to look down upon us in love, and spoken familiarly to us, as he did to the first man, conversing with him always as his lord and master! that he hath condescended not to put his word and promises only into the hands of man, in order to communicate them to us, as he did

formerly to the Israelites ; but that it also pleased him, that a divine Person should become man, and take upon him our nature, our miseries and infirmities ! This manner of tempering his majesty, and of condescending to our weakness, in order to stoop in some measure to us, is the most tender and most endearing that can be conceived ; for by this means God is become as accessible to us, as we possibly could desire.

REV. J. CLAUDE.

Christ is the All-sufficient Saviour, the All in All to Believers, who, by their union with Him, are complete and secure, receive their Spiritual nourishment, and all communications of God's Mercies and Blessings.

CONTEMPLATE, then, my soul, this sure, this everlasting foundation of thy hopes. What though, in ourselves, we are nothing but guilt and sin, God has appointed the way in which sin may be pardoned, and a sinner justified. Jesus has laid the sure foundation by his atoning sacrifice, his everlasting righteousness, and his complete redemption ; secured by his almighty power, and his eternal truth. If we look through the whole word of God, we shall see it continually witnessing to the glory of Jesus, and his all-sufficiency for the salvation of his people, the satisfaction of Jehovah in his work, and the blessedness of those who are in him, Acts iv. 12, 13. From the first promise to the last, all and each is founded upon him, and all of them are *yea and amen in Christ Jesus*. Therefore penitent sinners are continually directed to look to him, and their salvation is all his own work. In him his people shall be justified, Isa. liii. 4-6, 10-12. What security can the trembling sinner wish for more ! To look to Christ is, to concur with the design of God—to fulfil the commandment of God—to rest upon what God has laid for the purpose ; and to appear before God in Christ, is to be well-pleasing in his sight. While faith looks here, and rests here, it may confidently expect every promised blessing. Looking out of self, where there is nothing but guilt, it looks to the all-sufficiency of Jesus, where there is nothing but grace, and has the security of his promise. On whatever other base a sinner may rest his hope of security, it will not stand ; the false hope shall deceive him to his everlasting destruction, Isa. xxviii. 15-18.

There is no other way of effecting this but entering into the covenant of God in Christ Jesus. Let me, then, as a guilty penitent, fly hither, and believe the declaration of his love ; and, being *justified by faith, I shall have peace with God, through Jesus Christ*. . . . The great point in Christian experience and practice, is to be built up in Christ Jesus, for the foundation of our hope, and of every grace and gracious blessing. The source of every supply, and all the increase of the Christian life in his beauty, glory, and stability, is from him. And as we cleave to him in a stronger faith, dependence, and expectation, so will be the supply of grace and strength, of deliverance and victory, of sanctifying virtue, and abounding consolation. Not only are we directed to look to him at first, for the original communication of grace, but still we must be *looking unto Jesus*, in the Christian life, the Christian race, the Christian warfare : and in whatever we consider the spiritual life to consist, the spring, the supply, the vital efficacy is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and in him alone. If at any time we are led proudly to suppose, that we possess any inherent source of spiritual life within ourselves ; we are often left to ourselves, that we may discover our mistake, and by painful experience be taught what we still are, without the constant communications of his grace. Dull, lifeless, lukewarm, estranged from God, and, in our very duties and sacred exercises, unbelieving and unspiritual, we learn the unhappy effect of the withdrawal of the divine influences and favor, and the sad fruits of self-confidence and pride. To this perhaps the deepest falls of the best Christians may be primarily traced ; and an unholy self-dependence has issued in unholy conduct. But the humble believer, cleaving to God in Christ Jesus, possesses the sweet persuasion of his love, and the calm reliance of faith and hope ; and the innate virtue of the Redeemer, derived into the soul by faith, produces all the holy fruits of Christian obedience.

REV. W. GOODE.

This is the glorious grace, the joyful truth of the everlasting covenant. Such honor have all the saints of Jesus : his perfect righteousness is their clothing ; his almighty strength their protection. Who then shall condemn them ? what power can prevail against them ? O believer ! re-

joyce in thy privilege. This is our triumph against every accusation, 'In Jesus I have righteousness.' This is our victory over every enemy, 'In Jesus I have strength.' Under the most discouraging views of my nature, as corrupt and sinful—my life and practice, as unrighteous—the condemnatory sentence of the law, though just—the accusations of Satan, though grievous—yet in my glorious covenant Head and representative I am '*made the righteousness of God*;' in his beloved Son, I am for ever accepted. Under the most dejecting sense of our own weakness, to withstand corruptions, gain the mastery over sinful passions, and prevail against our enemies; though weak to perform any duty, insufficient to exercise any grace, unable to do the will of God, walk in his ways, and please him; yet ever, under all circumstances, the Spirit testifies of Jesus, 'he is our strength and righteousness.' All fulness is in him; and 'out of his fulness we receive grace for grace.' Though 'without Christ we can do nothing; yet, through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things.' Here is the mystery of faith. And this is the work of faith, to receive God's word and glory, and rejoice in what that testifies of the Saviour, who saith, *Abide in me*, John xv. 4. W. MASON.

Consider, then, fearful and fainting believer, and consider for thy comfort, that this precious atonement of Christ will reach as far as faith can reach, or hope desire; for Jesus is a High Priest, prevalent in intercession; Jesus was a sacrifice, infinite in merit, and everlasting in its consequences. If all the sins that ever were conceived in thought, or brought forth into act and deed, combined with all the practical ungodliness that ever was committed from Adam to this hour, were laid all together upon thee, the efficacy of Christ's blood is sufficient for the atonement of them all: and if he gave thee the grace of faith in his infinite atonement, thou wouldst be presented without spot or blemish before the throne of God. On the other hand, if thou didst never commit but one sin, and that sin only in thy thought; and if thou finally didst leave the world without faith in this great propitiation, that very little sin (as some might call it,) would suffice to sink thee down into a world of woe. AMB. SERLE.

The mutual love of God and the saints agree in this, that the way of communicating the issues and fruits of these loves, is only in Christ. The Father communicates no issue of his love unto us but through Christ; and we make no return of love unto him but through Christ; he is the treasure wherein the Father disposeth all the riches of his grace, taken from the bottomless mine of his eternal love, and he is the priest into whose hand we put all the offerings, that we return unto the Father. Thence he is first, and by way of eminency, said to love the Son; not only as his eternal Son, as he was the delight of his soul before the foundation of the world, Prov. viii. 30. but also as our Mediator, and the means of conveying his love to us; Matt. iii. 17. John iii. 33. v. 21. x. 17. xv. 9. xvii. 24. And we are said through him to believe in, and to have access to God. 1st. The Father loves us and *chooseth us before the foundation of the world*; but in the pursuit of that love, he *blesseth us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*; Eph. i. 3, 4. From his love, he sheds or pours out the holy Spirit richly upon us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; Tit. iii. 6. In the pouring out of his love, there is not one drop falls beside the Lord Christ. The holy anointing oil was all poured on the head of Aaron; and thence went down to the skirts of his clothing. Love is first poured out on Christ; and from him it drops as the dew of Hermon upon the souls of his saints. The Father will have him to have the pre-eminence in all things; Col. i. 18. *it pleased him, that in him all fulness should dwell*; vcr. 19. *that of his fulness we might receive, and grace for grace*; John i. 16. Though the love of the Father's purpose and good pleasure, have its rise and foundation in his mere grace and will, yet the design of its accomplishment is only in Christ. All the fruits of it are first given to him; and it is in him only that they are dispensed to us. So that though the saints may, nay, do see an infinite ocean of love unto them in the bosom of the Father, yet they are not to look for one drop from him, but what comes through Christ. He is the only means of communication. Love in the Father, is like honey in the flower, it must be in the comb, before it be for our use. Christ must extract and prepare this honey for us. He draws this water

from the fountain (through union and dispensation of fulness), we by faith, from the wells of salvation that are in him. Furthermore, it is also true that our returns are all in him, and by him also. And well is it with us, that it is so. What lame and blind sacrifices should we otherwise present unto God! He bears the iniquity of our offerings, and he adds incense unto our prayers, *Exod. xxviii. 38. Rev. viii. 3. John xiv. 6. Heb. x. 20-22.* Our love is fixed on the Father, but it is conveyed to Him, through the Son of his love. He is the only Way for our graces, as well as our persons to go unto God; through him passeth all our desire, our delight, our complacency, our obedience.

DR. J. OWEN.

Christ is the channel of grace and mercy; through him are all the streams of mercy that flow from God to us, and all the returns of praise from us to God.

The purchase of all those mercies which Providence conveys to us, is by the blood of Christ; for not only spiritual and eternal mercies, but even all our temporal ones, are the acquisition of his blood. As sin forfeited all, so Christ restored all these mercies to us again by his death. Sin had so shut up the womb of mercy, that had not Christ made an atonement by his death, it could never have brought forth one mercy to all eternity for us. It is with him that God freely gives us all things; so that whatever good we receive from the hand of Providence, we must trace it to Christ, and when we receive it we must say, *It is the price of blood.* Now this is a most endearing consideration. Did Christ die that these mercies might live? Did he pay his invaluable blood to purchase these comforts that I possess? Oh what transcendent, matchless love was the love of Christ! If his life had not been so afflictive and sad to him, ours could not have been so sweet and comfortable to us: it is through his poverty that we are enriched. These sweet mercies that are born of Providence every day are the fruits of the travail of his soul. . . .

The continuation of all your mercies and comforts, outward as well as inward, is the fruit of his intercession in heaven for you. *As the offering up the Lamb of God a sacrifice for sin, opened the door of mercy at first; so his appearing before God as a lamb that had been slain, still keeps that*

door of mercy open, Rev. v. 6; Heb. ix. 24. By his intercession, our peace and comforts are prolonged to us, Zech. i. 12, 13. Every sin we commit would put an end to the mercies we possess, were it not for this: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous and he is the propitiation for our sins.* Hence it is that he saves to the uttermost, to the last completing act, *Heb. vii. 25. . . .*

The covenant of grace, in which all your enjoyments are comprised, and by which they are secured, sanctified, and sweetened to you, is made in Christ and ratified by him betwixt God and you. Your mercies are all comprised in this covenant; *even your daily bread, Psal. cxi. 5,* as well as your justification, and other spiritual mercies. And this it is which sanctifies them, and gives them the nature of special and peculiar mercies. One such mercy is worth a thousand common mercies. And being sanctified and special mercies, they must needs be exceedingly sweet beyond all other mercies. On these accounts it was, that David so rejoiced in his covenant-interest, though laden with many afflictions, *2 Sam. xxiii. 5.* But now all this hangs entirely upon Christ. The New Testament is in his blood, *1. Cor. xi. 25.* And whatever mercies you reap from that covenant, you must thank the Lord Jesus Christ for them. REV. J. FLAVEL.

To wind up all: My son, if ever thou look for sound comfort on earth and salvation in heaven, unglue thyself from the world and the vanities of it: put thyself upon thy Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: leave not, till thou findest thyself firmly united to him; so as thou art become a limb of that body whereof he is head, a spouse of that husband, a branch of that stem, a stone laid upon that foundation. Look not, therefore, for any blessing out of him; and in, and by, and from him, look for all blessings. Let him be thy life; and wish not to live longer than thou art quickened by him. Find him thy wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption; thy riches, thy strength, thy glory.

Apply unto thyself all that thy Saviour is, or hath done.* Wouldst thou have the graces of God's Spirit? fetch them from his anointing. Wouldst thou have power

* Nier. Zanch. Loc. Com. 8. de Symbolo Apost.

against spiritual enemies? fetch it from his sovereignty. Wouldst thou have redemption? fetch it from his passion. Wouldst thou have absolution? fetch it from his perfect innocence: freedom from the curse? fetch it from his cross: satisfaction? fetch it from his sacrifice: cleansing from sin? fetch it from his blood: mortification? fetch it from his grave: newness of life? fetch it from his resurrection: right to heaven? fetch it from his purchase: audience in all thy suits? fetch it from his intercession. Wouldst thou have salvation? fetch it from his session at the right hand of Majesty. Wouldst thou have all? fetch it from him who is *one Lord, one God and Father of all; who is above all, through all, and in all*, Eph. iv. 5, 6.

BP. HALL.

Christ the Head of the Church.

HE, as the Head, guides and rules his church. He neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. He sees all the different departments of his government, and perfectly knows all those things which can be useful to it, and is able to supply them. He also knows all those things which can injure it, and has power to guard and protect it. He presides over all the conflicts which his members have to encounter, and crowns them with glorious victory. He is ever at hand to succour them, and to supply all their wants; insomuch that no danger is so pressing, which he could not avert, no mischief so great, which he could not remove, and no gift so precious which he could not procure for them. He is a Head possessed of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness; he knoweth all things; to him nothing is impossible; he seeth and disposeth of all things. From him alone the church derives all its life, motion, and spiritual feeling. He enlightens us with his light; he cherishes us with the warmth of his divine love; he purifies us by his Spirit; he renders us conformable unto himself: we grow up into him and by him. Believers, being in reality joined together in one, are enabled to assist each other considerably, according to the different callings with which God has honored them: but all their strength and energy depends on him, who is their Head, and without him the body would be nothing but a hideous carcass; and this shows the difference between the head of the human body and Jesus Christ. The head has

indeed some advantages above the body and the members, but it cannot subsist without them; for though the head directs the members, they must however support the head. But Jesus Christ would have subsisted for ever, though there never had been a single believer. It was his love, and not any necessity, that moved him to unite himself with us. As he does not become more powerful by the union with his members, so he would suffer no loss of power by their separation. We can do nothing without him: but he can do all things without us.

What a divine Head is this! who interests himself so tenderly in all the concerns of his body, that we can say, he shares equally with his members, both in their happiness, and in their afflictions. Although he is surrounded with glory, yet he is not insensible to the misery of his brethren. When we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, and take in strangers, he assures us, that we feed Him; Him who, feeds all creatures; that we clothe Him who clotheth even the lilies of the field; and take Him in, who filleth the universe. When Saul was attempting to crush the church in its infancy, and went in search after the disciples of the Lord from Jerusalem to Damascus, Jesus complained so grievously of his cruelty, as if Saul would storm heaven to dethrone him: *Saul, Saul! why persecutest thou Me?*

Jesus Christ has been appointed the Head of his Church in a very peculiar manner, and different from that government which he exercises over the rest of the creation. He beholds all other creatures as his footstool, Ps. cx. 1.; and hath power to break them in pieces, and to destroy them. But as to the Church, he regards it as his own body, his flesh and bones, his spouse, whom he nourisheth and cherisheth with the utmost tenderness, whom he will make a partaker of his glory. His other creatures indeed perceive the effects of his justice, power, and goodness: but the church enjoys the sweetness of his mercy. He is lord and sovereign of the whole creation; but he is peculiarly the Saviour and Head of the Church.

What a difference is there between the first and the second Adam! The one, as well as the other, is a head: but the former has plunged us into perdition, the latter has saved us; the one has entailed death

upon us, the other gives us life; the one by his disobedience has sunk us into an abyss of misery, the other by his obedience and righteousness has procured us infinite blessings.

The Church of Jesus Christ is the most perfect of the works of his hands. It is his image; it bears his impression; it is his new heaven and his new earth; his new world; it is that work which has cost him more than all the rest, for he accomplished it at the expense of his own life; and he is still daily employed in beautifying and rendering it more perfect.

We may say in a certain sense, that the Church contributes to the completion of Jesus Christ: for, as the head, though the most eminent part of man, would be a useless part, if separated from the body; so we may say, in like manner, that Jesus Christ would not be a head, if he had not a body to guide and direct. He would indeed not be less happy in himself, but he would not be a head; and in this respect, he obtains this completion, by being united with the Church, and gathering together all his members. But it must always be remembered, that we do not use this language with reference to Jesus Christ, considered in himself: but as in communion with his believers, with whom he purposes to constitute a body, which even bears the name of Christ. (*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ,* 1 Cor. xii. 12.) Oh, what an honor for the Church, to be not merely called *the body of Christ*, but even, in some measure, to contribute to his completion! B. PICTET.

Vital Union between Christ and Believers.

THERE is a vital union, or a divine connexion between Christ and his people, which takes place at regeneration, when the soul is made to hear the voice of the Son of God and live, for the Son quickeneth whom he will. Hence the apostle says '*I live; yet not I, but Christ who liveth in me.*' To live, implies three things, all which in a spiritual sense every true Christian is the subject of; in consequence of Christ being their life, he is that to his church which a soul is unto a body, with which it is vitally connected. From living union with him ariseth spiritual sensation, animation, preservation. They feel the

burden of guilt, and are sensible of the plague of their own hearts. They are convinced of their wants and weakness, and are conscious of being in a condition both mean and miserable. They see their own deformity and Jehovah's beauty. Their ears are open to receive instruction; and the voice of God in his word, whether terrific or tender, makes deep and durable impressions on their minds. They have a taste for the things of religion, after which they hunger and thirst. To them Christ is precious: his name is an ointment poured forth, his beauty is as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon; yea, he is altogether lovely. All their spiritual sensations, whether painful or pleasurable, are in consequence of living union with Jesus; for prior to its commencement they were dead in sin, and destitute of every holy emotion and perception. Christian activity is entirely owing to Christ's animative influence. Through his Spirit, and all-sufficient grace, they serve with pleasure, or suffer with patience; they strive and war against sin, and wrestle with principalities and powers, over all which they are more than conquerors through him who hath loved them. Yea, they can do all things through Christ strengthening them, and without him they can do nothing. The principle of animation ever discovers an inclination to preserve its connexion with that which is animated by it: this is obvious not only in rational life, but even in animal likewise. So, Christ has always discovered an entire, infinite inclination to keep and preserve his people in connexion with himself. He influences them to love, and labor for, the meat which perisheth not. He alarms their fears that they may escape danger, and strengthens their faith that they may lay hold of eternal life, secures their love by fresh discoveries of divine beauties, and the suitableness of celestial objects to heaven-born souls. Thus he draws them in the paths of duty by the bands of love, and by the cords of a man. He is the Author of their preservation, in such a way as to prevent presumption, and secure their attention to appointed means, which Divine wisdom has connected with the desired end. He says he will never leave them, but will be with them always to the end of the world; and writes his law in their hearts, that they might not finally depart from him. He saves them, there-

fore, not contrary to their inclination, but with their free consent, and fervent desire. *He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. Between Jesus and them, there is a oneness in perception, affection, interest, and end. As they are precious to him, so is he precious to them; the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. His interest is theirs, and theirs is his. He rejoiceth in the prosperity of his people, and they esteem Jerusalem, i. e. his cause on earth, above their chief joy; his revealed designs correspond with their real desires. The destruction of sin, and the perfection of purity, they long for. He gave his life for them, neither do they count theirs too dear to sacrifice on his behalf; their life therefore is in their hand, ready to be delivered up at their Saviour's call. They rejoice in Jesus on account of his mediatorial obedience, not only as it is their security from condemnation, but as it does infinite honor to Heaven's righteous law. What Christ has done intentionally, centres, and will ultimately terminate, in the vindication of God's moral government, and the eternal display of Jehovah's essential perfections, in all their native beauty, and infinite excellency, grandeur, and glory, that God, to whom sinners have an aversion, may appear and be acknowledged, not only by angels, but by men, as all in all. As influenced by grace, the true believer says, Oh, how I love thy law! I delight in the law of God after the inward man. Jehovah he admires and adores; and when he takes a solemn view of the great Eternal, whose glory dazzles angelic eyes, he is astonished, confounded, and lost, in pleasing wonder. He sinks into profound contempt of himself, and feels keen reflections on his criminal want of affection to and departures from a Being so infinitely deserving the supreme love of men and angels. But on the revival of hope, with humble reverence, and holy rapture, he sings, *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul. He is my rock and fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, my buckler, my salvation, and my high tower. In his presence is fulness of joy, at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in his likeness.* Though conscious of meanness and demerit, his language now is, Will he plead against me with his great

power? No, but he will put strength into me. I know whom I have believed. He hath said, My grace shall be sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness. The Lord will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.

As such souls freely give themselves unto the Lord, so he receives them graciously, and rejoiceth in them as his spouse, his property, and portion; it is his will, and their desire to be like him, and with him for ever, and for them to die is gain. Therefore, though shoals of professors perish, none who are possessors of his grace ever shall. Their internal life is eternal in its duration; for thus saith the Lord, *I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand*, John x. 28. *He that believeth on him is not condemned*, John iii. 18. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, Rom. viii. 1. As there is no condemnation to such now, there never shall be any. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*, John v. 24. *Whoso believeth on him shall not perish, but have eternal life*, John iii. 15, 16. *They shall never die; though they were dead, yet shall they live*, John xi. 25. *Who shall separate them from the love of Christ?* Rom. viii. 35. *Whose spirit is in them, as a well of water springing up into everlasting life*, John iv. 14. *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, but are dead while they live.* Those therefore who are vitally united to Christ, cannot lose their spiritual life while he maintains his own; for he hath said, *Because I live, ye shall live also.* Being bought by his precious blood, and kept by almighty power, they therefore may conclude with the apostle, *That when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, they shall also appear with him in glory.*

REV. R. HALL.

This doctrine, therefore, of faith, must be taught in its purity; namely, That as a believer, thou art by faith so entirely united to Christ, that he and thou are made as it were one person. That thou canst not be separated from Christ; but always adhere

so closely to him as to be able to say with confidence, I am one with Christ; that is, Christ's righteousness, his victory, his life, death, and resurrection, are all mine. On the other hand, Christ may say, I am that sinner; the meaning of which is, in other words, his sins, his death, and punishment, are mine, because he is united and joined to me, and I to him. For by faith we are so joined together as to become one flesh and one bone. *We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, Ephes. v. 30.; so that, in strictness, there is more of a union between Christ and me than exists even in the relation of husband and wife, where the two are considered as one flesh, Ephes. v. 31. This faith, therefore, is by no means an ineffective quality; but possesses so great excellency, that it utterly confounds and destroys the foolish dreams and imaginations of the sophisters, who have contrived a number of metaphysical fictions concerning faith and charity, merits, and qualifications. These things are of such moment, that I would gladly explain them more at large, if I could.

LUTHER.

We are so closely united with Jesus Christ, and he with us, that we make but one and the same body; so that we may call all that is his, our own, and reciprocally, all that is ours, his. Thus, on the one hand, we may assuredly promise ourselves eternal life, since we can as little fail of obtaining the kingdom of heaven, as Jesus Christ himself, who is heir of it; and, on the other hand, we cannot be condemned for our sins; since he has absolved us, by having them imputed to himself, as if they had been his own. This is the admirable exchange which, according to his infinite mercy, he has been pleased to make with us. For, by taking upon himself our poverty, he has made us partakers of his riches; by bearing our infirmities, he has confirmed and established us by his strength; by clothing himself with mortality, he has bestowed on us his glorious immortality; by bearing the grievous burden of our sins, he has communicated his merits and righteousness unto us; by coming down on earth, he has opened to us the way which leads to heaven; in short, by becoming the Son of man, he has made us the children of God. . . We ought not to con-

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sider Jesus Christ at a distance from us; but rather, as dwelling in us. For our hope of salvation from him, does not arise from his appearing to us afar off; but, having united us to his body, he makes us partakers both of his blessings and of his *own person*. Jesus Christ must not be separated from us, nor we from him; and we ought firmly to preserve the union by which he has joined us to himself. Jesus Christ is attached to us, not by an indissoluble tie only, but he unites himself to us more and more every day, so that, by an admirable union which passeth all thought, we become one plant and one body with him. CALVIN.

Behold what a happy change Jesus Christ has made with us. He took on him our nature, by his incarnation, and makes us partakers of his, by regeneration. By his incarnation he is become Immanuel, God with us; he hath dwelt among us, and our humanity was the tabernacle of his Divinity; but by regeneration, and by the union of his Spirit with our souls, we become *an habitation of God through the Spirit*, we are raised to the glory of the children of God; we become one with our Head; *we are in Christ*. By nature, we may say, we are in Adam; he is the principle of our life, the stock of the root of the human race, the Father from whom we derived our origin, who bore us all in his loins. But by grace we are in Christ. We are in Him, as the fountain of our new life, our Head, who has represented us, and who has given us all that we have of spiritual life. Oh, happy participation of nature, very different from the first! Oh, happy union with Christ! by which we are made one plant with him. We dwell in Christ, and Christ in us. As we say, that the members are in the body, to signify, they are united with it, that they make a part of it, that one spirit and one life animates both the whole body and its members; so are believers in Jesus Christ: they are all united with him, to make one and the same mystical body, with him. They are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; they live by the same life, they are quickened by the same Spirit which proceeds from the Saviour. As the branches live in the stock that shoots them forth, and in the root that bears them, so the believer lives in Jesus, but

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in a much more intimate degree, from whom he receives the life of grace, sap, nourishment, and influence, by the participation of his Spirit, which flows from him upon us. We are in Jesus Christ.

D. SUPERVILLE.

AND, while thou art thus taken up, see if thou canst, without wonder and a kind of ecstatical amazement, behold the infinite goodness of thy God, that hath exalted thy wretchedness to no less than a blessed and indivisible union with the Lord of Glory: so as thou, who, in the sense of thy miserable mortality, mayest say *to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister*; Job xvii. 14. canst now, through the privilege of thy faith, hear the Son of God say unto thee, *Thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*; Gen. ii. 23. Eph. v. 30.

Surely, as we are too much subject to pride ourselves, in these earthly glories; so we are too apt, through ignorance or pusillanimity, to undervalue ourselves in respect of our spiritual condition: we are far more noble and excellent than we account ourselves.

It is our faith, that must raise our thoughts to a due estimation of our greatness; and must show us how highly we are descended, how royally we are allied, how gloriously estated. That only is it, that must advance us to heaven, and bring heaven down to us: through the want of the exercise whereof it comes to pass, that, to the great prejudice of our souls, we are ready to think of Christ Jesus as a stranger to us; as one, aloof off in another world, apprehended only by fits in a kind of ineffectual speculation, without any lively feeling of our own interest in him; whereas, we ought, by the powerful operation of this grace in our hearts, to find so heavenly an appropriation of Christ to our souls, as that every believer may truly say, 'I am one with Christ: Christ is one with me.'

Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance, to lay claim to the royal blood of heaven: but, since it hath pleased the God of Heaven so far to dignify our unworthiness, as, in the multitude of his mercies, to admit and allow us to be *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. it were no other than an unthankful

stupidity, not to lay hold on so glorious a privilege, and to go for less than God hath made us.

BP. HALL.

Comforts arising from Union with Christ.

NOW the comforts that arise unto us of our communion with Christ are exceeding great: for first, we have with him a communion of natures; he hath taken upon him ours, and hath communicated his nature unto us. Of the first (after a sort) all mankind may glory, forasmuch as Christ took not on the nature of angels, but the nature of man; yet if there be no more, the comfort is small: yea, the condemnation of man is the greater, that the Lord Jesus came unto man, in man's nature, and man would not receive him. But as for the godly, let them rejoice in this, that the Lord Jesus hath not only assumed our nature, but also made us *partakers of the divine nature*: before he assumed our nature, he sanctified it, and now having by his own Spirit joined us to himself, we may be out of doubt, he shall not cease till he hath sanctified us.

It is a notable comfort that the work of our perfect sanctification is not left unto us to do; the Lord Jesus hath taken it into his own hand to perform it, what then shall hinder it? *I am persuaded that he who hath begun this good work in you, will perform it, against the day of Jesus Christ.* He who at his pleasure turned water into wine; he who made the bitter waters to become sweet; he who makes the wilderness a fruitful land, and the barren woman to become the mother of many children; in a word, he who calls things which are not, and causeth them to be, is he not able to make sinners become saints? or shall he not perfect that work of the new creation which he hath begun in us? As for man he may beget children, but cannot renew their nature; he may marry a wife, but cannot change her conditions. But the Lord Jesus hath so loved his church, *that he shall make it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle.* He found us *polluted in our own blood*, naked and bare: but he hath washed us with the water of regeneration; he hath anointed us with his oil; and covered our filthy nakedness with his excellent ornaments, and by his Spirit of grace he changed us from glory to glory into his own image.

Let this be unto thee, O man of God, a fortress against thine infidelity : by that part which thou seest already done, learn to believe that which yet is undone. Is God become man? hath the God of glory appeared in the shape of a servant? hath he been crucified, dead, and buried in thy nature? Be thou strengthened in faith, give glory unto God, think it not impossible that the Lord can make thee, who art but the son of man, the son of God ; that of a servant he can make thee a freeman ; that from the grave he is able to raise thee unto glory, and clothe thee, who art mortal and corruptible, with the garments of incorruptibility and immortality. It is a harder thing (saith Chrysostom) in our judgment that God should become man, than that man should be made the son of God : a notable prop for our weak faith ; we see that the son of God is become the son of Adam, and the son of Abraham, why then will we distrust, that we who are the sons of Adam, shall also be made the sons of God?

Secondly, we have in Jesus Christ a communion of goods : He hath taken upon him our sins, and the punishment thereof, he was wounded for our transgressions, and the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and hath again communicated to us his righteousness and life ; he hath not only given to us himself for our Saviour, but also whatsoever is his we may challenge as ours, by his own free gift. As the body, which is senseless in itself, enjoys the benefit of senses in the head, and rejoices therein as in her own : so we by our union with Christ enjoy, as ours, all that is his, though in ourselves we have no light, nor life, nor righteousness, by which we may stand before God, yet in him we have all these. In the corporal marriage there is a communion of goods ; so long as the one is rich, the other cannot be poor : how much more holds this true in the spiritual marriage? Seeing *the Lord is our shepherd, what then shall we want?* the Lord Jesus, who is rich unto all that call upon him, is our Husband. He himself unto us is become all things : he is a propitiation for our sins ; he is the light by whom we are translated from darkness ; he is life, to quicken us that were dead in trespasses ; he is the Way wherein we must walk ; he is the door by which we must enter ; he is the gar-

ment which we must put on ; he is the food whereupon we must live ; all these, and many more names (saith Cyril) are attributed to Christ, to assure us, though in ourselves we be void of all good, yet in him we shall be enriched with all spiritual graces needful for us.

And thirdly, we have by our union with Christ a communion of estates ; he is touched with a compassion of all our infirmities, *in all their troubles he was troubled: he that touches you, touches the apple of mine eye*, Zach. ii. 8. In our natural body (saith the apostle) *if one member suffer, all suffer with it*, 1 Cor. xii. 16. much more is it so in the spiritual : if the foot in the natural body be trod upon, the head complains, why hurt you me? as if the injury were done unto it ; but this feeling is far more lively in the mystical body : if Saul persecute the members in Damascus, the Head in heaven shall cry, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* Acts ix. 4. Oh that on the other part we were so lively and feeling members under our Head, that every prejudice to the glory of God, done by man, might grieve us more than if it were done unto ourselves ! Such was David's feeling affection, that he protesteth, the rebuke of them who rebuked the Lord fell upon him ; *Mine eyes* (saith he) *gush out rivers of tears, when I see the wicked will not keep thy law*, Psal. 119. But alas, the want of this sympathy with the head, and remanent members, evidently shows that this spiritual life is but weak in us.

Last of all, by our ingrafting into Christ we have this comfort, that we are sure of the benefit of perseverance, and that because (as the apostle saith) *we bear not the root, the root bears us* : our salvation depends not upon us, (for that were an unsure foundation :) it depends upon him ; because we are in him, we grow and increase ; yea, the older we be in Christ, the more we fasten our root and flourish, for *they who are planted in the courts of the Lord flourish in their old age, and bring forth fruit*. And whereas other branches may be pulled away from their stock, either by violence of wind, or force of the hands of men, or at least consumed by length of time, it shall not be so with them who are in Christ ; they keep not him, but are kept by him : *Because I am not changed, therefore ye are not consumed, O ye sons of Jacob* : but as for those who are not

planted in Jesus, be who they will, they shall be pulled up, they shall not continue in honor. *The Princes of the earth, their breath shall decay, they shall return to their earth, and their thoughts shall perish; the Judges thereof shall be made as vanity, as though they were not planted nor sown: or as if their stock took no root in the earth. The Lord shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, the whirlwind shall take them away like stubble.* O silly glory of worldlings, which dieth to them, oftentimes before themselves, at least with them! Their beauties consume when they go from the house to the grave, and their pomp doth not descend after them. Only happy and sure is the estate of that man, who is in Christ: neither life, nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall separate him from the love of God. BR. COWPER.

Infinite Value of Christ as our Friend.

That we are creatures wholly dependent, frail, ignorant, exposed, and unable to protect ourselves or provide for our interests, needs neither proof nor illustration. To us futurity is all blank. Between our present existence and the approaching vast of being, hangs a dark and impenetrable cloud. What is beyond it no human eye is able to discern, and no human foresight to conjecture. There, however, all our great concerns lie, and are every moment increasing in their number and importance.

There we shall enjoy the exquisite emotions and the high dignity of immortal virtue, the pure pleasures of a serene, self-approving mind, the eternal interchange of esteem and affection with the 'general assembly of the first-born,' and the uninterrupted favor of God in the world of joy; or we shall suffer the unceasing anguish of a guilty, self-ruined soul, the malignity of evil men and evil angels, and the wrath of our offended Creator, in the regions of woe. Between these infinitely distant allotments there is no medium, no intervening state, to which those who fail of final approbation can betake themselves for refuge. When, therefore, we bid adieu to this world, we shall meet with events whose importance nothing but omniscience can estimate, to us utterly uncertain, and utterly beyond our power.

Nay, the present moment, and every moment when present, is fraught with consequences incapable of being estimated by

any finite understanding. On time eternity hangs. As we live here, we shall live hereafter. If our time be well employed, and our talents well used, it will be well with us in the end. But if we abuse both here, it will be ill with us hereafter. The present moment is important, chiefly as it affects those which are future; begins or strengthens an evil or virtuous habit, depraves or amends the soul, hardens or softens the heart, and contributes in this way to advance us towards heaven, or towards hell. There is no man who is not better or worse to-day, by means of what he thought, designed, or did yesterday. The present day, therefore, is not only important in itself, as a season for which we must give an account, but because of the influence which it will have on the events of the morrow. Thus circumstanced, frail, irresolute, wandering, wicked, exposed to immense dangers, and yet capable of immense enjoyments, how infinitely desirable is it that we should have such a Friend as Christ. In his mind are treasured up all the means of happiness, which we need, the immense power, knowledge, and goodness, the unchangeable truth, faithfulness, and mercy which, and which only, can provide and secure for us immortal blessings, or preserve us from evils which know no end. In all places He is present, over all things he rules with an irresistible dominion. No being, no event, can be hidden from his eye. No enemy, however insidious, or however powerful, can escape from his hand. His disposition is written in letters of blood on the cross. He who died that sinners might live, he who prayed for his murderers, while imbruing their hands in his blood, can need, can add no proofs of his compassion for men. This glorious Redeemer is also *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. Such a friend to man as he was when he hung on the cross, he will be throughout eternity; and to every one, who sincerely desires an interest in his good-will, he will manifest his friendship in an endless succession of blessings.

While we wander through the wilderness of life, amid so many wants, how desirable must it be to find a friend able and willing to furnish the needed supplies! Amid so many enemies and dangers, how desirable must it be to find a friend, able and willing to furnish the necessary protection! Amid so many temptations, to watch over us!

Amid so many sorrows, to relieve us ; in solitude, to be our companion ; in difficulties, our helper ; in despondence, our support ; in disease, our physician ; in death, our hope, resurrection, and life ! In a word, how desirable must it be to find a friend who, throughout all the strange, discouraging state of the present life, will give us peace, consolation, and joy, and cause all things, even the most untoward and perplexing, to *work together for our good*.

On a dying bed especially, when our flesh and our hearts must fail of course, our earthly friends yield us little consolation, and no hope, and the world itself retires from our view, how delightful will such a friend be ! Then the soul, uncertain, alone, hovering over the form which it has so long inhabited, and stretching its wings for its flight into the unknown vast, will sigh and pant for an arm on which it may lean, and a bosom on which it may safely recline. But there Christ is present, with all his tenderness and all his power. With one hand he holds the anchor of hope, and with the other he points the way to heaven.

In the final resurrection, when the universe shall rend asunder, and the elements of this great world shall rush together with immense confusion and ruin, how supporting, how ravishing will it be, when we awake from our final sleep, and ascend from the dust in which our bodies have been so long buried, to find this glorious Redeemer *re-fashioning our vile bodies like unto his glorious body*, and re-uniting them to our minds, purified and immortal ! With what emotions shall we arise, and stand, and behold the Judge descend *in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels* ! With what emotions shall we see the same unchangeable and everlasting Friend placing us on his right hand in glory and honor, which kings will covet in vain, and before which all earthly grandeur shall be forgotten ! With what melody will the voice of the Redeemer burst on our ears, when he proclaims, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world* ! How will the soul distend with transport, when, accompanied by *the church of the first-born*, and surrounded by *thrones, principalities, and powers*, it shall begin its flight towards the highest heavens, to meet *his Father and our Father, his God and our God* ! What an internal heaven will dawn

in the mind, when we shall be presented before the throne of Jehovah ; and, settled amid our own brethren in our immortal inheritance and our final home, behold all our sins washed away, our trials ended, our dangers escaped, our sorrows left behind us, and our reward begun, in that world where all things are ever new, delightful, and divine !

At these solemn and amazing seasons, how differently will those unhappy beings feel who on a death-bed find no such friend ; who rise to the resurrection of damnation ; who are left behind, when the righteous ascend to meet their Redeemer ; who are placed on the left hand at the final trial ; and to whom in the most awful language which was ever heard in the universe, he will say, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels* !

DR. DWIGHT.

‘ I may be faint and weary (says the believer) ; but my God cannot. I may alter and fluctuate, as to my frames ; but my Redeemer is unchangeably the same. I might utterly fail and come to nothing, if left to myself ; but I cannot be so left to myself ; for the Spirit of Truth hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*. He will renew my strength, either by changing my weakness into strength, or by enduing me with his own power. He is wise to foresee and provide for all my dangers : he is rich to relieve and to succour me in all my wants : he is gracious to hear and to answer all my prayers : he is omnipotent to deliver and defend me from all my enemies : he is faithful to perfect and perform all his own promises : he is eternal and immortal, to bless my poor depending soul with eternal blessedness and immortality. O what a great and glorious Saviour for such a mean and worthless sinner ! O what a bountiful and graciously indulgent Friend for such a base and insignificant rebel ! What, what am I, when I compare myself, and all I am of myself, with what I can conceive of my God, and of what he hath kindly promised even to me ! What a mystery am I to myself, to angels, to men ! A worm of earth to be like a star of heaven ; a corruptible sinner to be an incorruptible saint ; a rebel to be made a child ; an outlaw to become an heir ; a deserter of hell to be an inheritor of heaven ; a strong hold of the devil to be changed into a

temple of God; an enemy and a beggar to be exalted to a throne, to be in friendship with God, one with Christ, a possessor of his Spirit, and of all this honor, happiness, and glory, for evermore; and all without any right to any one thing on my part, but the miseries of the lowest hell! O what manner, and what matter, of love is this! Lord, take my heart, my soul, my all! I can render thee no more; and I would render thee no less. It is, indeed, a poor return. My body and soul are but *two mites*; and yet (glory be to thee!) thou who didst esteem those of the poor widow, wilt not despise these of mine. Lord, they are thine own too; and I can only give thee what is thine! I melt with gratitude; and even this gratitude is thy gift. O take it, and accept both it and me in thyself, which is all my salvation and all my desire, for ever and ever!’

AMB. SERLE.

There is no rest or consolation for the Soul in life or in death, and no support under trials and afflictions, or convictions of sin, but in Christ.

ALL the sufferings and distresses of this world are not able to destroy the happiness of a Christian, nor to diminish it; yea, they cannot at all touch it; it is out of their reach. If it were built on worldly enjoyments, then, worldly privations and sufferings might shake it, yea, might undo it: when those rotten props fail, that which rests on them must fall. He that hath set his heart on his riches, a few hours can make him miserable. He that lives on popular applause, it is almost in any body's power to rob him of his happiness; a little slight or disgrace undoes him. Or, whatsoever the soul fixes on of these moving unfixed things, pluck them from it, and it must cry after them, ‘Ye have taken away my gods!’ But the believer's happiness is safe, out of the reach of shot. He may be impoverished, and imprisoned, and tortured, and killed, but this one thing is out of hazard; he cannot be miserable; still, in the midst of all these, he subsists a happy man. If all friends be shut out, yet the visits of the Comforter may be frequent, bringing him glad tidings from Heaven, and communing with him of the love of Christ, and solacing him in that. It was a great word for a heathen to say of his false accusers, ‘Kill me they may, but they cannot hurt

me.’ How much more confidently may the Christian say so! Banishment he fears not, for his country is above; nor death, for that sends him home into that country.

The believing soul having hold of Jesus Christ can easily despise the best and the worst of the world, and defy all that is in it; can share with the apostle in that defiance which he gave, *I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom. viii. 39. Yea, what though the frame of the world were a dissolving, and falling to pieces! This happiness holds, and is not stirred by it; for it is built upon that Rock of eternity, that stirs not, nor changes at all.

ABP. LEIGHTON.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and goodness of God! who found means to display at once his justice and his mercy, and to forgive sin, in punishing it! O the infinite love of the Father, *who so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son!* O the infinite love of the Son, who so loved his enemies, that he gave himself up to the most cruel death, to give them life! O the infinite love of the Holy Spirit! who loved mankind so highly, as to make known unto them this glorious gospel, and to seal in their hearts the promises of God through faith in Jesus Christ!

This, then, is the only ground of the peace of the soul, and contentment of the mind, to be confidently assured, that *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, who took upon himself our sins, bore the punishment due to them, and in exchange gave to us his righteousness, by which we are justified before God. This is the sum of the whole gospel, and the sole consolation of believers, Rom. v. 1.

Without this assurance, all moral precepts, and all philosophical arguments, must fail to set the mind at rest.

P. DUMOULIN.

Be sure that you think of and consider Christ as he is held forth in the gospel. We are very apt to have mis-thoughts of Christ. As Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, so he would transform Christ before you into an angel of darkness. But the Scripture holds him forth

under such relations as make him very amiable, very lovely, unto poor sinners. Are you accused by Satan, the world, and your own conscience? He is called your Advocate. Are you ignorant? He is called the Prophet. Are you guilty of sin? He is called a priest; the High Priest. Are you afflicted with many enemies, inward and outward? He is called a king; the King of kings. Are you in straits? He is called your *Way*. Are you hungry and thirsty? He is called the *Bread and Water of Life*. Are you afraid you shall fall away and be condemned at the last? He is our *second Adam*; a public person; in whose death we died; and in whose satisfaction we are satisfied. As there is no temptation, nor affliction, but some promise or other doth especially suit it; so there is no condition but some name, some title, some attribute of Christ, is especially suitable thereto. And as you should not look on Christ, but in reference to your condition; so you are not to look upon your condition alone, but with Christ's attribute suitable thereto. If you look upon Christ's attribute of love, without your condition, you may presume; if on your condition, without Christ's attribute of love, you may despair: think on both together, and you will not be discouraged.

REV. W. BRIDGE.

Conscience, when awakened by the terrors of the Lord, is like a raging, tempestuous sea. It works, and it is not in the power of any creature to quiet it. Spiritual terrors, as well as spiritual consolations, are not known till felt. O, when the arrows of the Almighty are shot into the spirit, and the terrors of God set themselves in array against the soul; when the venom of those arrows drink up the spirits, and those armies of terrors charge violently and successively upon it, as in Job vi. 4, what creature then is able to stand before them? Even God's own dear children have felt such terrors as have distracted them; Psal. lxxxi. 15. Conscience is the seat of guilt. It is like a burning glass; it contracts the beams of the threatenings, twists them together, and reflects them on the soul, until it is on fire. If *the wrath of the king be like the roaring of a lion*, then what is the Almighty's wrath? It is *burning wrath*, Job xix. 11; *tearing wrath*, Psal. l. 22; *surprising wrath*, Job xx. 23; and *abiding wrath*,

Job iii. 36. In this case no creature can relieve: all are physicians of no value. Some under these terrors have thought hell more tolerable, and have thrust themselves out of the world into it, to avoid these gnawings. Yet Jesus Christ can quickly calm these spiritual waves also, and hush them with a word; yea, he is the Physician, and no other. It is the sprinkling of his blood, which, like a cooling fomentation, allays these heats within. That blood of sprinkling speaks peace, when all others have practised on the soul to no purpose; and the reason is, because he is a Person in whom God and man, justice and mercy, meet and kiss each other.

Can none appease a troubled conscience but Christ? Then learn, O my soul, to understand, and daily more and more to savor that glorious name, even Jesus, who delivers not only from the wrath to come, but from that which is felt here also. O, if the foretaste of hell be so intolerable; if a few drops, let fall on the conscience in this life, be so insufferable, what is it to have all the vials poured out to eternity, when there shall be nothing to divert, mitigate, or allay it?

Here men have somewhat to abate their terrors, some hopes of mercy, at least a possibility: but there is none there. O my soul, how art thou loaded with guilt! and what wouldst thou be, should God arouse that sleepy lion in thy bosom! My condition is not at all the better because my conscience is quiet. The day is coming when it must awake, and will lighten and thunder terribly within me, if I flee not to Christ before. O Lord, *who knoweth the power of thy wrath?* O let me not carry this guilt out of the world with me, to maintain those everlasting flames. Let me give no sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye-lids, till I feel the comfort of that blood of sprinkling, which alone speaketh peace.

REV. J. FLAVEL.

The doctrines of the gospel are to the weary and heavy-laden, soft as the dew on the tender herb, and refreshing as copious showers to the earth when parched with heat. They present, in the blood of Jesus, a balm that heals the wounded conscience, and that dispels all its anxious fears; that turns disquietude into peace, and fills the soul with blooming hope, and with joy unspeakable. Ask

that once disconsolate mourner, who saw himself exposed to the avenging hand of heaven, who felt his sins a burden too heavy for him to bear, and whom law-terrors or Satan's fiery darts had driven almost if not altogether to the brink of despair; ask him, I say, what was it that made his soul the seat of tranquillity and consolation, that changed the shadow of death into the light of the morning, and clothed him with the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and he will tell you, that it was a sight of Jesus crucified, revealed to the eye of faith. Beholding the handwriting of the law nailed to the cross, and the sword of justice sheathed in the heart of him who died on it as a Surety; finding it written, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—that his blood cleanseth from all sin—and that he will cast out none that come to him*, the Lord gave him power to set his seal to the testimony, and he came with all his guilt and wants and unworthiness, and he found Jesus true to his word, and mighty to save.

He lives now a monument of his mercy, to proclaim the riches of his grace, and to declare to others what he knows in his own conscience, that the Gospel is the sweetest sound on this side heaven, to oppressed and despairing sinners, and that Christ Crucified is all in all to them that believe.

DE COURCY.

When the power or declaration of God's fiery law strikes like the burning beams upon the conscience; when guilty fears distress the mind; when the fiery darts of temptation, of raging lusts and passions, disallowed, harass and torment the soul; when continued affliction, trial, and sorrow, have exhausted the spirit; how refreshing the application of his grace, how sweet that peace which he speaks to the conscience, and enables faith to realise, when, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ*. The freedom and sovereignty of saving grace, the fulness and perfection of redeeming love, the faithful promises of pardoning mercy, the discovery of a reconciled God in Christ Jesus, afford a sweet satisfaction, calm the conscience, allay the fears of guilt, cool the rage of temptation and of lusts, and restore to the exhausted spirit

the confidence of faith and the joy of salvation. The wells of consolation are opened, the river flows which makes glad the city of our God, the dry and thirsty soul rejoices, faith receives the blessing, and praise returns the glory to its Source. In the midst of all those troubles of life which exhaust the faith and patience of the believer, here alone he finds relief, and here he finds an all-sufficiency. . . .

When we contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ in the character of a Wall of Fire, Zech. ii. 5, we must view it as referring to that abounding grace, whereby he has removed the wrath and secured the favor of a covenant God, and by which he for ever shelters the believer from the painful apprehension and dread of falling under it. This is the security against sin and guilt, against conscious fears, against the thunder of the holy law, against all the accusations and attempts of the enemy, and the horrors of deserved judgment.

The God of truth and holiness, within this sacred enclosure of his covenant engagements, is beheld as *the God of all grace, who can make all grace abound towards us, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus*. This is the first view that brings peace to the guilty sinner: grace, abounding grace, in the Person and work and characters of the Saviour. This only affords consolation, and removes the renewed apprehension of guilt and sin from the mind of the believer. The grace of Jesus stands like an impenetrable wall between the guilty penitent and the arrows of vindictive justice, and is a hiding-place from the wind, and the covert from the storm, &c. Beneath its shadow we behold only the face of him *who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage; who retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy*; who will perform the truth and mercy which he has promised (see Mic. vii. 18, 19); and change the frowns of indignation for the smiles of love, the curse of wrath for the blessings of salvation. The abounding grace of Jesus secures my soul from fear, and satisfies me, in exercising faith upon his promise, with the confidence of peace and safety.

REV. WM. GOODE.

SECTION IV.—OF GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

Personality of the Holy Spirit.

CHRIST is born, the Spirit is his forerunner; Christ is baptised, He bears his testimony; Christ is tempted, he leads him away; Christ works miracles, he is with him; Christ ascends, he succeeds. What is so great and divine that he cannot do? What is so divine a name, except that of unbegotten and begotten, that he may not be called by it? He is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Mind of Christ, the Spirit of the Lord, and himself Lord, the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of liberty, the Spirit of wisdom and prudence, of counsel and strength, of knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord: As the efficient cause of all these, he fills all things with his essence; contains all things, fills the world, and is greater than the world, greater in power and energy than the world can comprehend: He is good, righteous, and Truth by nature, not by gift; he sanctifies, and is not sanctified; he measures, but is not measured; he gives, but does not receive; he fills, but is not filled; he contains, but is not contained; he knows and teaches all things; blows where he will; is angered, tempted; is the Spirit of light and life, who builds temples, and dwells in them as God: he does all things that God himself does; he appeared as cloven tongues of fire; he distributes his gifts, made apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers; he is almighty, all-seeing, penetrating into all spirits at the same moment of time, though far dispersed from each other: which plainly shows that he is limited to no space.

GREGORY NAZIENZEN.

All is by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that those who wandered are directed, the wicked are converted, the weak are strengthened. He, the right Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the princely Spirit, rules, perfects, dwells in our souls, and suffers not those in whom he dwells, to err, to be corrupted, or to be overcome. He perfects those whom he has taught, those whom he possesses, and whom he has guided, with the sword of most powerful truth. He washes away sins, justifies the ungodly, heals discord, binds strongly with the bond of love, raises us up to heaven, and freeing us from the vanities of this world, makes us heirs of

the heavenly kingdom; of which this is the chief happiness, that this body, by spiritual influences, converses with angels; nor shall there be any more the appetites of flesh and blood, but the fulness of God is known, and the Spirit dwells in them.

CYPRIAN.

1. He appeared in a visible shape, as at the baptism of Christ, in the form of a dove, Matt. iii. 16; and in the day of Pentecost in the form as of cloven tongues of fire sitting on the Apostles, Acts ii. 3.

To assume a visible shape, belongs not to attributes or to accidents, but to Persons. One could not without absurdity relate as an historical fact that the justice or compassion of God, or any other perfection, had presented itself in a bodily form. Nor ought it to be retorted that accidents and qualities are obvious to the eye, and yet have no subsistence by themselves. For although such accidents and qualities fall immediately under the notice of sense, they always imply some person or thing in which they inhere. Under that visible form then something must have subsisted, which the text asserts to have been the Holy Spirit, and expressly distinguishes from the Persons of the Father and the Son, at the baptism of our Saviour. Nor can it be said that the fiery tongues are to be limited in their signification to the gifts of the Holy Spirit; for the text plainly distinguishes the Spirit from his gifts; *They began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit* (with which they were filled) *gave them utterance.*

2. The Scriptures make mention of transgression against the Holy Spirit. For instance, the Israelites are said to have provoked him, Isa. lxiii. 10. Blasphemy against him is declared to be an unpardonable sin, Matt. xii. 31, 32. Ananias and Sapphira are said to have lied unto the Holy Ghost, and died immediately in consequence, Acts v. 3.

Now as God alone is the object of worship, it follows that against God alone, properly and ultimately, sin can be committed. And as blasphemy against the Father and the Son supposes them to be Persons, we must infer the like of the Holy Spirit, from the mention of blasphemy against *Him*. In fact, the argument here is peculiarly decisive, inasmuch as this

latter species of blasphemy is pronounced to be by far the most heinous, as being both *in this world, and also in the world to come*, i. e. for ever (according to St. Mark's interpretation) unpardonable. Unless the Holy Spirit were a Person, this could not be said. For though some things in Scripture are said to be *evil spoken of*, (or, as it is in the Greek, *blasphemed*;) which are not persons;—as *our good*, Rom. xiv. 16; *doctrine*, 1 Tim. vi. 1; *the word of God*, Tit. ii. 5; *the way of truth*, 2 Pet. ii. 2; yet it is easy to see these things are only spoken of as blasphemed relatively to God. If our good be evil spoken of, God, from whom it proceeded, is offended—if the evangelical *word or doctrine*, God the Author of it is insulted. But blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is described as direct and absolute impiety: for all blasphemy reflects upon God, but this blasphemy is distinguished from blasphemy against the Father and the Son, therefore the one is not included in the other: but all blasphemy reflects upon God, therefore the Holy Ghost is himself perfectly and Personally God.

3. A very clear distinction is frequently made in Scripture between the Holy Spirit and his gifts. And why did the Scripture thus carefully distinguish, if the Holy Spirit himself be nothing more than a gift of God? The gifts of the Spirit are indeed sometimes called simply *the Spirit*; but in other passages he is plainly distinguished from them as their Author and Efficient Cause. *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, &c., by the same Spirit. All these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will*, 1 Cor. xii. 4—8—11. And lest we should think the Spirit to be a mere energy or power of God, belonging to him in the manner of an attribute; the Scriptures distinguish *power from spirit*, as in Luke iv. 14. *He returned in the power of the Spirit*, Acts i. 8. *Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you*: where power denotes the effect, and *Spirit* the cause or principle: that is to say, a Person possessed of power which he communicates to others.

TURRETINE.

That the Holy Ghost is a *Person*, and not an *emanation, a virtue*, or some thing

from God, which is not God, will appear from the following, among many other texts of Scripture.—He *creates and gives life*, Job xxxiii. 4; is seen descending *in a bodily shape*, Luke iii. 22; commands Apostles, Acts viii. 29. and xi. 12; lifts up an apostle through the air by his own power, v. 39; sends messengers, Acts xix; appoints ministers in the church, Acts xx. 28; calls apostles, Acts xiii. 2; bestows gifts, Heb. ii. 4; speaketh to the churches, Rev. ii. 7; spake by the prophets, Acts xxviii. 15. 2 Pet. i. 21; speaketh *expressly*, 1 Tim. iv. 1; renews his people, Titus iii. 5; helpeth infirmities, Rom. viii. 26; maketh intercession, *ibid.*; reveals mysteries, Eph. iii. 5; searcheth all things, 1 Cor. ii. 10; teacheth all things, John xiv. 26; guideth into all truth, John xvi. 13; beareth witness in earth and heaven, Rom. viii. 16. 1 John v. 6; pronounceth words of blessing, Rev. xiv. 13; testifies of Christ, John xv. 26; glorifies Christ, John xvi. 14; is *another Comforter*, distinct from Christ, John xiv. 16; hath a *mind* of his own, Rom. viii. 27; hath a *will* of his own, 1 Cor. xii. 11; hath a *power* of his own, Rom. xv. 13; hath worship performed in his name, together with the Father and Son, Matt. xxviii. 19; hath a temple for his worship, 1 Cor. vi. 15; abides with his people for ever, John xiv. 16; and, by no people is blasphemed, but upon the peril of damnation, Matt. xii. 31.

Each of these Scriptures (and much more all together) is sufficient to demolish that unscriptural and absurd opinion of the Socinians and others, which treats the Holy Spirit of God as an effusion separate from God, consequently, as something created by God; and, therefore, something not of his nature or in it. It was the saying of a good man, that “the Devil may pervert Scripture, but he cannot answer it.” But the above texts, to which many more may be added, are so positive and direct in proof of the Spirit's *personality*, that, able as the Devil is in sophistry, they seem to defy his wiles upon this point, and are as convincing to faith, as any mathematical demonstrations can possibly be to sense. AMB. SERLE.

Divinity of the Holy Spirit.

THE Holy Spirit can be most clearly proved to be not only a Person, but a Divine Person, by the four arguments which

likewise prove the divinity of Christ : viz. because there are attributed to him the names, the attributes, the works, and the honor of God.

I. The Names. What is spoken of Jehovah of hosts, is applied to the Holy Spirit. *Well spake the Holy Ghost to Esaias, saying, Go to this people, &c.* And he who is called the Spirit of God is also directly called God and the Rock of Israel. In the same manner Ananias is said to have lied unto God, because he lied to the Holy Spirit; and thus the faithful are said to be temples of the living God, because they are temples of the Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in them. *Know ye not that your body is the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* 1 Cor. iii. 16. and vi. 19. Now as the terms Temple and Divinity are correlative, he whose temple we are called can be no other than God. Nor should this be understood in mere reference to his presence and habitation : for every inhabited place is not therefore a temple, and we are never called Temples of the Divine word, which ought nevertheless to dwell in us abundantly. But a temple has a necessary relation to *his* worship to whom it was erected : whence Augustine observes : 'If it were impious to build a temple to a creature, must not he be very God to whom indeed we do not build a temple, but are ourselves his temple?'

II. Divine Attributes belong to him : 1. *Eternity*, see Hebrews ix. 14; the *Eternal Spirit*. 2. *Omnipresence and Immutability*, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* Psal. cxxxix. 7. 8. *The Holy Ghost dwelleth in you*, 1 Cor. iii. 16; not only by his energy, but really, since he is as God is in his temple. 3. *Omniscience*. *He searches the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 10; not as empowering us to search : for indeed it belongs not to us to search the depths of God : we should be overwhelmed with his glory. But thus to search is the very nature of the Holy Spirit, since he is said to be concerned with what belongs to God, just as the spirit of a man is concerned with what belongs to the man when by his own reflex act he examines his own secret mind. And to this conclusion we are led by the apostle's plain intention, which is, to prove that only the omniscient and all-searching Spirit of God can certainly reveal to us the things which God has prepared for those who love him, which other-

wise neither eye hath seen nor ear heard, nor have they entered into the heart of man, v. 9. But he is said to search, not by making inquiry, which would imply doubt and imperfection, but by penetrating, as God is said *to search the reins and the heart*. To the same purpose is it said that he declares things to come, John xvi. 13, which only belongs to God, and, 2 Pet. i. 21, that he spake by the prophets. 4. *Omnipotence*. He is called the 'power of the Highest.' *He is the quickening Spirit*, 1 Cor. xv., *who quickens our mortal bodies*, Rom. viii. 11.

III. The Works of God are attributed to him : 1. Natural works, as Creation, Gen. i. 2. Preservation and government, Psal. civ. 30. The performance of miracles, Mat. xii. 28. 1 Cor. xii. 4. 2dly, Works of grace. The Conception of Christ, Luke i. 35. The anointing and mission of Christ, Isa. lxi. 1. Forgiveness of sin and regeneration, 1 Cor. vi. 11. John iii. 5. The government of the Church, Acts xiii. 2. and xv. 28. and xx. 28. The prediction of events, John xvi. 13. Acts xi. 28. The conferring of gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 7. Illumination, Eph. i. 17, 18. Sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. 13. and 1 Pet. i. 2. The raising of the dead, Rom. viii. 11.

IV. Divine honor is attributed to him. We are baptised in his name no less than in the Father's and the Son's. Of him we implore grace and peace and every other blessing, no less than of the Father and the Son, 2 Cor. xiii. 13. and Rev. i. 4. where grace and peace are implored of the *Seven Spirits who are before the throne*. For the Holy Spirit is thus described, not in regard to his personal nature, which is one and undivided, but with regard to the sevenfold, i. e. the manifold diversity of gifts which he pours forth upon the faithful : and the number Seven is employed, not only on account of its supposed completeness, but in allusion to the seven churches to which the apostle writes, to intimate, as it were, that he would bestow himself as largely upon them, (such is the abundance of his gifts,) as if the whole Spirit were given to each of the churches. Nor can it be said that by the title of Seven Spirits is intended, not a Person, but only a means through which the apostle signifies that grace and peace proceed from the Father ; for he implores grace of the Seven Spirits in the same manner as of the Father, evidently considering them as a prin-

ciple and a cause. Thus, inasmuch as we are the temple of God, St. Paul concludes that we should glorify God in our body and our spirit, which are God's.—What God? In truth, the God whose temple we are. Not that he excludes the Father and the Son; but in reference to the economy of the Persons, he particularises the Holy Spirit, who is glorified by invocation. Whence, Acts iv. 24, 25., the Spirit who speaks by the prophets is invoked by the church: *Lord, thou art the God who hast made heaven and earth, who spakest by the mouth of thy servant David.* Agreeably to which authority the ancient church likewise always invoked him in the hymn to the Holy Spirit: 'Creator Spirit, come!' and in the Doxology, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, &c.

It remains that we obviate certain objections.

1. Though the Scriptures rarely make mention of adoration and homage to the Holy Spirit, we should very improperly argue from hence that he is not equally adorable with the Father and the Son: for in fact neither inculcations nor examples are wanting of such worship. But as in the economy of salvation, which answers to the order of the Persons, the Father works by the Son, and the Son by the Holy Spirit; for the same reason, the glory of the Deity, which consists of adoration, is by the Holy Spirit, who moves the hearts of the faithful to prayer, referred through the Son, (as Mediator,) to the Father. And therefore he is oftener represented as the Author and the moving principle of prayer than as its object; the one who invokes, i. e. causes us to invoke, rather than invoked himself.

2. Though the gift of God, if his essence be undivided cannot itself be God, yet if the *distinctions* in the Godhead be considered, nothing forbids the idea that a gift of God may be also a Divine Person: just as Christ himself, a Divine Person, is himself likewise called the gift of God, John iii. 16. and iv. 10. and John ix. 5. And thus the Holy Spirit may be so called. Nor is it always repugnant that the same should be at once a gift, and a giver of himself, as Christ gives himself for us, to nourish us up unto eternal life. *The bread which I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world,* John vi. 51.

3. If things are occasionally attributed to the Spirit, which seem scarce suitable to

a Person, as when it is said that we are *anointed, baptised, and filled* with him; that he is *poured forth* from God and *given* to us;—such expressions must be understood of his gifts within us, and are quite consistent with the truth of his Personality. Thus indeed we are said to *put on Christ*, to *receive* him as a gift from God, and to *feed upon* him, without prejudice to the personality of the Son.

4. The *divisions* of the Spirit, Heb. ii. 4, signifying not passive partitions of the Spirit himself, but active distributions of his gifts there mentioned: distributions which are made by the Holy Spirit, who distributes to every one as he will, 1 Cor. xii. 11. Accordingly, though we acknowledge the distribution of his gifts, we deny the division of his Person, which in itself is undivided, but distinct from every thing else.

5. As the term Holy Spirit often signifies simply the gifts of the Spirit, so is he said to admit of increase or diminution, not with reference to himself, but to the gifts which he pours out upon man. Thus God is said to have set apart a portion of the same spirit which he had conferred upon Moses, i. e. of the same gifts and graces which were necessary to support him under the weight of public government, for the seventy elders who were to share his burdens, Num. xi. 17. Elisha asks for himself a double portion of the Spirit, 2 Kings ii. 9. i. e. spiritual powers of twice the extent usually observed in other prophets, or a double portion of the gifts of the Spirit, great abundance of them to sustain the great and weighty office imposed on him. And if this is called the power and spirit of Elias, Luke i. 17, still it must be understood not as originally his, but that Elias was the subject in which it resided.

6. The true God cannot be a messenger by command, because he acknowledges no superior. But he may be a messenger by consent. His thus becoming so, denotes indeed a difference of office, but not of essence. And in this latter sense, the Son and the Spirit are declared to be sent.

7. The Holy Spirit (it is said) was not before the glorification of Christ, John vii. 39: But this cannot mean absolutely, as if he then first began personally to exist. The effects of his power demonstrate the contrary. The expression relates only to the more abundant effusion which should afterwards take place on the apostles and others.

TURRETINE.

This Doctrine of great importance to the Believer.

To thee, O believer in Jesus! this article of the Spirit's deity is a maxim of indisputable moment—an axiom of indubitable truth. Thou wilt not deny his word, which asserts it; thou canst not resist his *witness in thyself*, which confirms it to a demonstration. Others may deny what they do not experience or feel; but thou knowest *him that is true*, because thou art *in him*; and he, with all his evidences of comfort, love, and joy, *dwelleth in thee*. He first brought thee spiritual life from the death of sin: he reconciled thee to God, when thou wast an enemy by wicked works: he giveth thee a thousand tokens of his presence and support: he leadeth thy thoughts and thy heart direct to God and heaven; preserves thee (always ready in thyself to stray) from numberless snares in thy daily walk, and at length will give thee *an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom*. Thou constantly feelest thyself to be a poor, dependent creature; able to think nothing, to will nothing, and to do nothing good of thy own power; and it is thy privilege and thy joy to find this gracious Spirit working in thee both *to will and to do of his own pleasure*. Thou art never happy but in this perception. Thou art never holy but in this enjoyment. Thou art never safe but in this protection. What cares the devil for all the resolutions and strength of man, even if man could exert them, without grace divine? He broke down the patience of the most patient Job, and made him curse the day in which he was born, when God permitted him to exercise his power for a trial. And he would bring to nothing the highest attainments of thy soul, did the Spirit of truth depart from thee for a moment. If any man bade fair to stand alone, surely it must have been the man *after God's own heart*; but he fell, as every body knows, and fell foully and horribly too. If any man could hope to recover himself from a fall, who might expect to do it sooner than he, who had vanquished repeated foes, and trampled upon the boasted strength of a giant; yet this man, a prince and a prophet too, wise and powerful, lay for a long time in his transgression, and at last cried out, like a helpless infant, for the restoration and support of the God's free Spirit, Psal. li. 12. He found

the powers of darkness and sin too mighty for his feeble efforts to resist, and too subtle for his dull understanding to oppose. The wisdom of God's Spirit alone could repel the sophistry of hell, and the energy of the Almighty bring him back from the captivity of Satan.

Art thou not sensible of this gracious operation, O Christian! from time to time within thy soul? Dost thou never feel a power, which is not thine own? never taste a joy, which animal sense cannot induce? never rise to views, which nature cannot show thee? never have a communion with Heaven and the unutterable glories of the world above, which earth could not inspire?

AMB. SERLE.

The particular Office and Character of the Holy Ghost.

I HAVE often thought what a tenderness the Lord Jesus manifested to his people, in that interesting moment, when about to leave them to the more immediate ministry of the Holy Ghost, in that he spake of him under so many different names and characters. Had he meant only to have identified his Person, one surely would have been enough. But no! It is plain that the Redeemer intended thereby to endear him the more to our affections, that by so many precious names, and all of them strikingly expressive of a particular office and character, we might find somewhat peculiarly sweet and affectionate in every one! And hence he is endeared to the heart, that is more and more enlightened to see his ignorance, as a Teacher; to the soul tempted with unbelief, as a Witness; to the cold and lifeless in prayer, as a *Spirit of grace and of supplication*. In times when errors prevail, and the great truths of God are called in question, the soul regards him then particularly, as *the Spirit of truth to guide into all truth*. And when the heart is bowed down under manifold heaviness, it is precious to be able to look up to him, as *the Holy Ghost, the Comforter*. . . .

And first, as an Almighty Teacher, he stands forth a most glorious testimony to the truth.

It was a covenant promise, relating to the gospel church; *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord*. And Jesus himself explained this, in reference to the Holy Ghost. *When he (says Christ) the Spirit of truth is come, he shall teach you*

all things. He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you. And one of the apostles adds in confirmation of it, *The anointing which you have received of him, abideth on you, and ye need not that any man teach you. But the same anointing teacheth you all things. . . .*

To him it particularly belongs to open to the soul all that relates, in the covenant of the Redemption, to the Father's love, the Redeemer's grace, and his own precious manifestations. His is the blessed work to reveal the whole scheme of salvation to the sinner's view, and no less to open the sinner's heart to the cordial reception of the truth in the love of it. It is he, and he alone, that can *convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*: and while impressing on the sinner's mind the fullest and strongest apprehensions of the sinful, helpless, and ruined state of our undone nature, which renders redemption-work so abundantly interesting, to him alone it belongs to enlighten the eye of our understanding, to behold the Son of God in all the glories of his Person, and in the suitableness, and fulness, and all-sufficiency of his redemption; so as to carry conviction to the heart, that *there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.*

But what I would most earnestly desire to impress upon the reader's mind, respecting the office of this matchless instructor, and what above all things I do beg of him never to lose sight of in the recollection of his character, is the manner and effects of his divine teaching. Not only do those glorious truths of God which he teacheth, mark the greatness of his Person; but the sovereignty of his method in teaching them, decidedly proves *his eternal power and Godhead.* As it was said of the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, *never man spake like this man*: so of the Holy Ghost in the day of his power, it must be said, *He teacheth not as man teacheth! . . .*

He is also a *Witness* in the heart of every real believer *to the truth as it is in Jesus.* For under this character, as well as the former, he is pointed out to us by the Redeemer, when predicting his coming.—*He shall testify of me.*

And how sweetly and graciously doth he testify of Jesus, and perform every

other part of this blessed work in the heart! Truly is that scripture verified to the believer's experience, wherein God appeals to the fact itself, in proof: *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.* For every single instance of his power over the heart, in the multiform methods by which he witnesseth to the truth as it is in Jesus, carries with it a testimonial of his Godhead. . . .

Who, but the Holy Ghost, can witness to the gracious state of the people of God, when under the doubts and fears which the remains of unbelief, and in-dwelling corruption, form in the heart!—Who but he can testify to the soul, that the believer is justified before God, by the obedience of the Lord Jesus, and hath redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace! Who, but the blessed Spirit, can witness to the spirits of the redeemed, concerning their adoption-character before God; when the great accuser of the brethren, joining with the perfidy of their own hearts, are prompting them to call every evidence in question!

My brethren! if you know any thing of the Spirit's work in the heart, you will know how to value God the Holy Ghost in this most interesting office of his ministry, as a witness to all the great truths of salvation. For nothing, surely, can be more satisfying to the soul, in seasons of distrust, in times of temptation, under languor both of mind and body, than his gracious testimony to the everlasting, unchangeable love of God the Father; and the endearing tokens of affection which he discovers to the believer, concerning the Person and offices of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even a single promise, brought home and applied to the heart, by the blessed Spirit, in an hour of dejection and sorrow, what a cordial doth it afford to the drooping spirits! It produceth that sweet effect which the apostle prayed for the Church, in *filling the soul with joy and peace in believing,* and enabling it to *abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. . . .*

Let us go on to the consideration of another part of the Spirit's work in the heart, by which he eminently displays the vast importance and efficiency of his ministry in the church of the Lord Jesus;—I mean, as the quickener to prayer, and the helper of our infirmities in prayer. And

this forms so distinguishing a part in the operations of the Holy Ghost, that the bare mention of it ought to be enough, in confirmation of its reality. I pity the man indeed, who is altogether unconscious of this work of God the Spirit in the soul, and hath yet to learn what his influence means, when drawing nigh the mercy-seat.

Of all the branches of the Divine science, in the practical parts of experimental religion; none can be more interesting, because none can be more frequently needed than an heartfelt acquaintance with that sweet promise of the gospel-church, in which God saith, *I will pour out the Spirit of grace and of supplication*. And the man who is well versed in the knowledge of his own heart, and hath drank deep into the same spirit of divine things as the apostle, will, from the same consciousness as he had, of not knowing *what to pray for as we ought*, best know how to appreciate the gracious work of God the Spirit, in this special office of his divine agency. . . .

And is not the blessed Spirit a Comforter also? Oh! yes. Praised be his name, this is a very decisive part of his Divine character. The Lord Jesus himself particularly directed the church to receive him under this title, when he emphatically called him the Holy Ghost, *the Comforter*. And the mournful, long-trying, long-exercised believer, who hath at times known and felt the refreshments of his grace under this special part of his divine offices, would not, I am well assured, forego the evidences of his power, and Godhead in it, neither part with the sweet name of Comforter, for a thousand worlds. . . .

The sympathy of his love in our afflictions, the soft and tender soothings of his grace to our distresses, the manifestations which he makes of the Lord Jesus, in all his lovely characters, exactly suited to the soul's need; and the grace, and purposes, and mercy, which he displays, of the Father's heart, towards his people in their troubles—these are among the testimonies by which the Holy Ghost manifests himself as a Comforter, when directing the heart into *the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ*.

There is one office more of the blessed Spirit, by which his work is made known in the heart, though it is not (as far as my observation hath extended to the writings of others) as generally noticed as its im-

portance should seem to demand: I mean as a *Remembrancer*. *He shall bring all things* (said Jesus when speaking of him,) *to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you*.

And I have found this office in the Spirit's work, at times, so very interesting and precious (if I may venture to say so) in my own experience, that I cannot but beg to recommend it to the reader's notice with the more particular attention. My memory of divine things is so treacherous, (though it may not perhaps be equally so with the reader,) that, like a sieve, every thing valuable runs through it, and leaves nothing of the finer parts behind. It is, I conceive, therefore, a most gracious and endearing office of God the Holy Ghost, to act as a Remembrancer, in calling the mind afresh to the recollection of the precious tokens of divine love long past. And in those numerous instances, where the temptations of Satan, joined with the treachery and deceitfulness of the heart, have blotted out from the mind a thousand memorandums of grace received, which in the moment of making them we fondly thought never would be lost; surely it is a distinguishing mercy in the Holy Ghost to bring them again to remembrance. And what can be more pleasing, or more profitable, than when the blessed Spirit opens to our view the volume of our own history, turns back the leaves of our experience, points to the chapter and page where Jesus showed his love, and God the Father answered prayer, and thus brightens up again the recollection of long-forgotten blessings, and stamps afresh the assurance, that nothing but mercy and goodness have been following us all the days of our life!

DR. HAWKER.

The Spirit giveth Life.

THE greatest part of the world, whether learned or unlearned, think that there is no need of purging and purifying of their hearts for the right knowledge of Christ and his gospel; but though their lives be never so wicked, their hearts never so foul within, yet they may know Christ sufficiently out of their treatises and discourses, out of their mere systems and bodies of divinity: which I deny not to be useful in a subordinate way; although our Saviour prescribeth his disciples another method to come to the right knowledge

of Divine truths, by doing of God's will. *He that will do my Father's will* (saith he) *shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* He is a true Christian indeed, not he that is only book-taught, but he that is God-taught; he that hath an *unction from the Holy One* (as our apostle calleth it) *that teacheth him all things*; he that hath the Spirit of Christ within him, that *searcheth out the deep things of God: for as no man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.*

Ink and paper can never make Christians, can never beget a new nature, a living principle in us; can never form Christ, or any true notions of spiritual things, in our hearts. The gospel, that new law which Christ delivered to the world, it is not merely a *letter* without us, but a *quickening Spirit* within us. Cold theorems and maxims, dry and jejune disputes, lean syllogistical reasonings, could never yet of themselves beget the least glimpse of true heavenly light, the least sap of saving knowledge in any heart. All this is but the groping of the poor dark spirit of man after Truth, to find it out with his own endeavours, and feel it with his own cold and benumbed hands. Words and syllables, which are but dead things, cannot possibly convey the living notions of heavenly truths to us. The secret mysteries of a divine life, of a new nature, of Christ formed in our hearts, they cannot be written or spoken, language and expressions cannot reach them; neither can they be ever truly understood, except the soul itself be kindled from within, and awakened into the life of them. A painter that would draw a rose, though he may flourish some likeness of it in figure and colour, yet he can never paint the scent and fragrantcy; or if he would draw a flame, he cannot put a constant heat into his colours; he cannot make his pencil drop a sound, as the echo in the epigram mocks at him

—*Si vis similem pingere, pingere sonum.*

All the skill of cunning artisans and mechanics cannot put a principle of life into a statue of their own making. Neither are we able to inclose in words and letters the life, soul, and essence of any spiritual truths, and as it were to incorporate it in them.

Some philosophers have determined, that *ἀρετή* is not *διδάκτων*; virtue cannot be taught by any certain rules or precepts. Men and books may propound some directions to us, that may set us in such a way of life and practice, as in which we shall at last find it within ourselves, and be experimentally acquainted with it: but they cannot teach it us like a mechanic art or trade. No, surely, *there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.* But we shall not meet with this spirit any where but in the way of obedience: the knowledge of Christ, and the keeping of his commandments, must always go together, and be mutual causes of one another.

CUDWORTH.

Take Christ as a purchaser: the purchase is made, the price is paid; yet is not the state perfect, unless there be investiture. But the investiture is by the Spirit. - - - What will ye that I say? Unless we be joined to him, as well as he to us: as he to us by our flesh, so we to him by his Spirit; nothing is done. - - - Ye know that it is the first question the apostle asked, *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?* If not, all else is to no purpose. Without it, we are still (as Jude calleth us) *animales, Spiritum non habentes.* And this is a certain rule. He that hath not his Spirit, is *none of his*; Christ profiteth him nothing. - - - As nothing is done for us, so nothing can be done by us, if he (the Spirit) come not. No means on our part avail us aught. 1. Not *baptism*; for *Nisi ex Spiritu*, if He come not, well may it wash soil from our skin, but no stain from our soul: no laver of regeneration without *renewing of the Holy Ghost.* 2. No *preaching* neither; for that is but a *letter* that *killeth*, except the Spirit come too and quicken it. 3. No *sacrament*; we have a plain text for it; *the flesh profiteth nothing*, if the Lord and Giver of life (the Spirit) be away. 4. To conclude; *no prayer*: for, *nisi*, unless the Spirit help our infirmity and make intercession with us, we neither know how, nor what to pray. BP. ANDREWS.

Operations of the Spirit.

WHEN the Spirit by the power of the word of grace doth work the will in us, yet still the will hath the dominion of its own act, that is, it is not servilely, or com-

pulsorily thereunto overruled, but worketh, *ex motu proprio*, by a self-motion, unto which it is quickened and actuated by the sweetness of divine grace, as the seed of that action, according to that excellent known speech of St. Augustine, *Certum est nos velle cum volumus, sed Deus facit ut velimus*. Thus we see how the subjection of Christ's people unto his kingdom is a voluntary act in regard of man's will, and an act of power in regard of God's Spirit inwardly enlightening the mind with the spiritual evidence, not only of the truth, but the excellence and superlative goodness of the gospel of Christ; and inwardly touching the heart, and framing it to a lovely conformity and obedience thereunto.

The ground of this point, why there is an act of power required to conquer the wills of sinners unto Christ, is that notable enmity, stoutness, reluctancy, rebellion, weariness, averseness; in one word, fleshliness which possesseth the wills of men by nature: such forwardness unto evil, so much frowardness against good, such a spring and bias from private ends, and worldly objects, such fears without, such fightings within, such allurements on the right hand, such frowns and affrightments on the left; such depths of Satan, such hellish and unsearchable plots of principalities and powers, to keep fast and faithful to themselves this chief mistress of the soul of man; such sly and soaking, such furious and fiery temptations, to flatter or to fright it away from Christ; such strong prejudices, such deep reasonings, such high imaginations, such scornful and mean conceits of the purity and power of the ways of Christ, such deceitfulness of heart, such mis-persuasions and presumptions of our present peace, or at least of the easiness of our future reformation, such strong surmises of carnal hopes which will be prevented, or worldly dangers incurred, or private ends disappointed; such lusts to be denied, such members to be hewed off, such friends to be forsaken, such passions to be subdued, such certain persecutions from the world, such endless solicitations of Satan, such irreconcilable contentions with the flesh; in the midst of all these pull-backs, how can we think the will should escape and break through, if God did not send his Spirit, as once the angel unto Lot, Gen. xix. 16, to lay hands upon it while it lingers and hankers after its wonted course, to use a merciful con-

quest over it, and, as the Scriptures express it, *to lead it, to draw it, to take it by the arm, to carry it in his bosom, to bear it as an eagle her young ones on her wings*; nay, by the terrors of the Lord, and the power of his word and wrath, to pull and snatch it as a brand out of the fire? Certainly, there is so much extreme perverseness, so much hellishness, and devilish antipathy to God and his service in the heart by nature, that if it were left to its own stubbornness to kick, and rebel, and fall back and harden itself, and were not set upon by the grace of Christ, no man living would turn unto him, or make use of his blood; by the same reason that any one man perisheth, every man would too, because in all there is as fundamental and original enmity to the ways of grace, as there is in any.

The consideration whereof may justly humble us in our reflection upon ourselves, whom neither the promises of heaven can allure, nor the blood and passions of Christ persuade, nor the flames of hell affright from our sins, till the Lord by the sweet and gracious power of his Holy Spirit subdue and conquer the soul unto himself. If a man should rise from the dead, and truly relate unto the conscience the woful and everlasting horrors of hell, if a man's natural capacity were made as wide to apprehend the wrath, fury, and vengeance of a provoked God, the foulness, guilt and venom of a soul fuller of sins than the heavens of stars, as the most intelligent devils of hell do conceive them. If an archangel or seraphim should be sent from heaven to reveal unto the soul of a natural man the infinite glory of God's presence, the full pleasures of his right hand, the admirable beauty of his ways, the intimate conformity and resemblance between his divine nature in himself, and image of his holiness in the creature, the unsearchable and bottomless love of Christ in his incarnation and sufferings, the endless incomprehensible virtue and preciousness of his blood and prayers; yet so desperately evil is the heart of man, that if after all this, God should not afford the blessed operation and concurrence of his own gracious Spirit, the revelation of his own arm and power upon the soul, to set on those instrumental causes, it would be invincible by any evidence, which all the cries and flames of hell, which all the armies and hosts of heaven were able to beget. There

is no might or power able to snatch a man out of the hands of his sin, but only God's Spirit. Notable are the expressions which the Holy Ghost every where useth, to set forth this wretched condition of the heart by nature: wilfulness and self-willedness, *We will not hearken, we will not have this man to reign over us*; *Θελήματα*, many wills in one. Rebellion and stubbornness, stoutness of heart, contestation with God, and gainsaying his word; impudence, stiffness, and hard-heartedness, mischievous profoundness, and deep reasonings against the law of God; pertinacity, resolvedness, and abiding in mischief; they hold fast deceit; obstinacy and self-obduration, *They have hardened their necks that they might not hear*; impotency, immoveableness, and undocileness, their heart is uncircumcised; *they cannot hear, there is none that understandeth or seeketh after God*: scorn and slighting of the messages of the Lord, where is his word? *Where is the promise of his coming?* Incredulity, and belying the Lord in his word, saying it is not he: *who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Wrestling, resisting, and fighting with the word, rejecting the counsel of God, vexing and striving with his Holy Spirit, *Ye have always resisted the Holy Ghost*. Rage and fierceness of disordered affections, despising of goodness, traitorous, heady, and high-minded thoughts. Brutishness of immoderate lust, the untamed madness of an enraged beast without any restraint of reason, or moderation. In one word, a hell, and gulf of unsearchable mischief, which is never satisfied. It is impossible that any reasonable man, duly considering all these difficulties, should conceive such an heart as this to be overcome with mere moral persuasions, or by any thing less than the mighty power of God's own grace. To him therefore we should willingly acknowledge all our conversion and salvation. So extremely impotent are we, O Lord, unto any good, so utterly unprofitable, and unmeet for our master's use, and yet so strongly hurried by the impulsion of our own lust towards hell, that no precipice, nor danger, no hope nor reward, no man or angel is able to stop us, without thine own immediate power, and therefore *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name* only be attributed the glory of our conversion. **BP. REYNOLDS.**

It is clear that all Christian virtues and graces, though wrought immediately by us, and with the free consent of our own wills, are yet the fruit of God's Spirit working in us. That is to say, they do not proceed originally from any strength of nature, or any inherent power in man's free-will; nor are they acquired by the culture of philosophy, the advantages of education, or any improvement whatsoever of natural abilities by the helps of art or industry: but are in truth the proper effects of that supernatural grace which is given unto us by the good pleasure of God the Father, merited for us by the precious blood of God the Son, and conveyed into our hearts by the sweet and secret inspirations of God the Holy Ghost. Love, joy, and peace are fruits, not at all of the flesh, but merely of the Spirit.

All those very many passages in the New Testament which either set forth the unframeableness of our nature to the doing of any thing that is good, (*not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought; in me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing*, 2 Cor. iii. 5; Rom. vii. 18; and the like,) or else ascribe our best performances to the glory of the grace of God, (*without me you can do nothing. All our sufficiency is of God. Not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. It is God that worketh in you both the will and deed*, John xv. 7; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Eph. ii. 8; Phil. ii. 15; and the like), are so many clear confirmations of the truth. Upon the evidence of which truth it is that our mother the church hath taught us in the public service to beg at the hands of Almighty God that he would 'endue us with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to his holy word:' and again, (consonantly to the matter we are in hand with, almost *in terminis*,) that he would 'give to all men increase of grace to hear meekly his word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.' As without which grace it were not possible for us to amend our lives, or to bring forth such fruits, according as God requireth in his holy word.

And the reason is clear: because as the tree is, such must the fruit be. Do men look to *gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* Matt. vii. 16. Or can they expect from a *salt fountain* other than brackish water? Certainly, what is born of flesh can be no better than flesh. *Who*

can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Job xiv. 4. Or how can any thing that is good proceed from a heart, all the *imaginations of the thoughts whereof are only and continually evil?* Gen. vi. 5. If we would have the fruit good, reason will (and our Saviour prescribeth the same method) that order be taken, *first to make the tree good*, James i. 21.

But you will say, it is impossible so to alter the nature of the flesh as to make it bring forth good spiritual fruit; as it is to alter the nature of a crab or thorn, so as to make it bring forth a pleasant apple. Truly, and so it is: if you shall endeavour to mend the fruit by altering the stock, you shall find the labour altogether fruitless; a crab will be a crab still, when you have done what you can: and you may as well hope to wash an Ethiopian white, as to purge the flesh from sinful pollution.

The work therefore must be done quite another way: not by alteration, but addition. That is, leaving the old principle to remain as it was, by superinducing *ab extra* a new principle, of a different and more kindly quality. We see the experiment of it daily in the grafting of trees: a crab-stock, if it have a scion of some delicate apple artfully grafted in it, look what branches are suffered to grow out of the stock itself—they will all follow the nature of the stock, and if they bring forth any fruit at all, it will be sour and styptic. But the fruit that groweth from the graft will be pleasant to the taste, because it followeth the nature of the graft. We read of *λογος ἐμψυρος*, an ingrafted word. Our carnal hearts are the old stock; which, before the word of God be grafted in it, cannot bring forth any spiritual fruit acceptable to God; but when, by the powerful operation of his Holy Spirit, the word which we hear with our outward ears is inwardly grafted therein, it then bringeth forth the fruit of good living. So that all the bad fruits that appear in our lives come from the old stock, the flesh: and if there be any good fruit of the Spirit in us, it is from the virtue of that word of grace that is grafted in us.

BP. SANDERSON.

Some philosophers of old flattered the pride and vanity of men, by teaching them that they wanted nothing to make them virtuous, but only a firm and steady reso-

lution of being so; that this resolution they themselves were masters of, and might exert at their own pleasure. They confidently boasted that their happiness was a thing wholly in their own power; that they need not ask of the gods to be virtuous, nor consequently to be happy, since they could be so without their aid or concurrence, or even in despite of them. The Pelagians afterwards raised their heresies upon the principles which these heathen philosophers had first broached; they engaged in the quarrel of depraved nature against divine grace: all our disorders they would have to be the effects not of sin but of nature; all our evil inclinations seemed to them capable of being subdued by our own unassisted reason; and they did not think the succour of any supernatural grace necessary either for the combating of vice, or the maintenance of their integrity and virtue. But the sober Christian hath learned from the Scriptures to speak and to think more humbly of himself, and more becomingly and magnificently of God; we are there taught that *we are not sufficient of ourselves to think*, much less to do, *any thing as of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God*; that *it is God which worketh within us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*; that it is *by the Spirit* we must *mortify the deeds of the body*, if we would *live*; that it is God who, by his Spirit, *makes us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight*. The humble and devout Christian being thus satisfied of the necessity of God's grace, both from his own experience and from the Scriptures, and being assured of the vital influences of this Spirit from the promises made to him in the Gospel, will not be over-curious to inquire into the secret and inconceivable manner of its operation. He will choose rather to feel these influences, than to understand or explain them, and will not doubt of that power, which, though he cannot give an account of as to the manner of its working, he plainly perceives to be great and marvellous from its mighty and wonderful effects: for when, in reading the holy Scriptures, he finds the veil of darkness removed from before his understanding; when those clouds of ignorance that had overcast his mind, are presently dispersed; when the

doubts under which he had for some time labored are on a sudden cleared; when such pious thoughts as were wont to pass transiently are long dwelt upon, so as to leave behind them deep and lasting impressions; when these are suggested to him without his seeking, and are urged and pressed upon him so importunately, that he cannot choose but listen unto them; when, from a calm and serious consideration of the state of his own soul, the odiousness and danger of sin, the beauty and necessity of holiness, he is led to make good and pious resolutions of serving God with greater purity for the time to come; when he finds a sudden *impulse* upon his spirits, rousing him up to the performance of some important duty which he had before neglected; or an unexpected check, stopping him in the midst of his course, when he is rushing on blindly and impetuously to the commission of some heinous sin; when in his devotions he finds his attention fixed, his affections inflamed, and his heart melted within him; when, while the voice of God's minister preaching the saving truths of the Gospel sounds in his ears, he is sensible of an inward voice speaking with greater force and efficacy to his soul, to his understanding, and to his heart; when, under the pressure of any grievous affliction, he feels unexpected joy and comfort; when *light rises up in the midst of darkness*; when there is *given unto him beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*; upon all these and the like occasions he is sensible of the presence and aid of God's Holy Spirit, whose *grace* alone is *sufficient* to all these purposes, and whose *strength* is thus *made perfect in his weakness*.

BP. SMALRIDGE.

All that Christ has suffered and done for the salvation of mankind, is of no benefit to us, as long as we are separated from him. Therefore, that he may communicate to us those things, which he has received from his Father, it is necessary that he should become ours, and dwell in us. And for this cause he is called our Head and first-born Brother, and we again are said to be grafted into him, and to have *put on* Christ.

This union alone shows, that with respect to us, he did not come into the world

with the mere empty title of Saviour. And it is by grace, and by the power of this Holy Spirit, that we become his members, in order that he may possess us, and that we may mutually possess him also. It is by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are regenerated for a heavenly life, so that we no longer are guided by our own, but by his motions or operations. If there is any good in us, it is the fruit of his grace only; and without him all our light, and even all our best qualities are but darkness.

For this reason, St. Paul so highly exalts the office of the Spirit; for the ministers and teachers of the Gospel would in vain raise their voices, and cry out; did not Jesus Christ, the chief Shepherd, draw to himself by his Spirit those whom the Father has given him? Thus the perfection of salvation being in Jesus Christ, in order to make us partakers of it, *he baptizeth us with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, enlightening us in the faith of his Gospel, and regenerating and making us new creatures; he consecrates us temples and sanctuaries of the living God.

As we cannot come to Jesus Christ, unless we are drawn to him by the Holy Spirit; when we are therefore so highly favored, we are lost in astonishment, and are raised in our minds to thoughts far surpassing the human understanding. For the soul, enlightened by his divine light, receives, as it were, a new eye to contemplate the heavenly mysteries, with whose splendor and brilliancy it was before quite dazzled. The understanding thus enlightened by the Holy Spirit, begins immediately to relish the things that belong to the kingdom of heaven, of which before it had no conception, and for which it had no relish.

Some perhaps may say, that they do not deny the necessity of our having the Holy Spirit; but that, from a sentiment of humility and modesty, we ought not to think that we have yet received him. If this is the case, what does the Apostle mean, when he exhorts the Corinthians, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves, whether Jesus Christ be in you. Hereby know ye*, saith St. John, *that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*. Would it not be to call in question the promises of Jesus Christ, were we to pre-

tend to be the servants of God, without having his Spirit; since he has declared that he will pour it out on all believers? It is a dreadful blindness to charge Christians with presumption, under the pretence that they boast of the presence of the Holy Spirit, without whose efficacy there can be no Christianity. Such persons plainly show, by their example, the truth of what the Lord said, that his Spirit is unknown to the world, and that none know him, but those with whom he dwelleth, and in whom he is. CALVIN.

The Spirit, the bond of Union between Christ and Believers.

Now the bond of our union to Christ is the Holy Spirit derived from him, as the Head of the church, and is the inward, powerful, and lasting principle of holiness and new obedience in believers. *He that is joined unto the Lord, is one Spirit*; that is, by the Spirit of holiness has a real participation of his life, is both quickened and united to him, 1 Cor. vi. 17. John vi. 56. When the prophet Elisha by the outward applying of the parts of his body to the dead child, inspired life into him, there was no real union between them, 2 Kings iv. 34; but Christ is by his Spirit so intimately united to believers, that he lives in them and they in him, Gal. ii. 20. The sanctifying Spirit renews the directing and commanding faculties, the fountains of moral actions, enlightens the understanding with saving knowledge, rectifies the obliquity of the will, purifies the affections, and reforms the life; so that 'the same mind' is in Christians 'as was in Christ;' and as his conversation was, such is theirs in the world. This divine change is not wrought by natural reason, though assisted by the most powerful arguments. The breath of a man may as easily dispel a mist or thaw a frost, as human directions and motives to virtue can renew the mind and heart, and produce a holy frame of soul towards God. Renewed Christians are said to 'be in the Spirit,' illuminated, inclined and enabled by the Spirit to do God's will; and the Spirit of God to dwell in them, by his peculiar and eminent operations. 'They live in the spirit, and walk in the spirit.' An angel may assume a body and act by it; but the human soul enlivens it, and performs sensible operations by it. And such a principle is the

Holy Spirit to the soul, gives it spiritual life, activity, and power for good works. By what application of the Spirit's power this is produced, is mysterious and inexplicable; but as the apostle speaks of his rapture into the third heavens, that he knew it was real, and heard unutterable things, though how it was performed, *whether in the body, or out of the body*, he could not tell: thus when a natural man, the current of whose thoughts and affections was to the things of this world, becomes spiritual; when the carnal appetite is subdued, and sanctified reason has the throne; when he feels such strong and sweet impulsives to holiness, as engage the will; when the stream of his desires ascends to the things above, and his life becomes holy and heavenly; he feels and knows this wonderful change, though the manner how it was wrought he cannot tell. DR. BATES.

The Grace of God is the Gift of the Spirit, and must be sought through Christ the Mediator.

HAVING insisted so much on the doctrine of divine grace in general, it is not requisite to insist long on the way the Gospel teacheth it is communicated to us, and should be sought after by us, that is, out of the fulness that is in the Son of God, by the application of his Spirit. This paper is not designed for considering objections against the Trinity, but against the doctrine of the Gospel about the way to pardon of sin, and grace to perform duty: in the mean time, supposing the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, there are several considerations that might be of use to them who wonder why it should not be sufficient in general to seek grace from God, without asking his Spirit out of the fulness that is in the Mediator.

And here it may be useful to consider first the beautiful harmony that may be found between the several parts of the doctrine of the Scriptures about these adorable divine Persons. If they are represented co-operating in the work of Redemption, they are represented so likewise in the other divine works of creation and providence; and as there are different operations more immediately ascribed to each of them, so what is ascribed to the Spirit in the work of our salvation, has a beautiful resemblance to the part attri-

buted to him in the other divine works. In effect, it is very observable, that the Holy Ghost is represented as more immediately concerned in completing the divine works. It seems to be his particular office to stamp the lovely image of the Creator on the creatures, according to their several capacities, whether visible or invisible, adorning the former with all that beauty, light, order and perfection they are capable of; and adorning the latter with the beauty of holiness, producing that light, order, and regular disposition, in which the perfection of created spirits consisteth. His operation, on visible as well as invisible creatures, is (according to a way of speaking of some of the ancients) a work of sanctification. At the beginning of the Bible we are told, after the mass of the world was produced, the earth was void, and without form, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the first account we have of bringing all things to order, is the Spirit's moving on the face of the deep. His operations to this day are a continuation of his ancient work, a bringing light out of darkness, and order out of confusion; bringing the new creation, as he did the old, to order and perfection gradually through several days' works, till at last all terminate in an everlasting sabbath. In Psal. civ. it is said that God sends forth his Spirit, to restore the decayed face of nature, and to revive it with fresh lustre and beauty, which is a very proper work for him who is the Comforter: he is represented also as the immediate cause of all spiritual impressions, ordinary and extraordinary, of prophetic inspiration, gifts, of miracles, and languages, as well as the ordinary graces necessary to all sorts of persons. It is observable, that though the Son of God, while on earth, gave many excellent instructions to his disciples himself, their gifts and graces were never completed, till he sent them his Spirit, as he promised. His name, the 'Holy Spirit,' and other names given him, have a manifest suitableness to his office: and the several parts of the doctrine of the Scriptures concerning him, both in the Old Testament, and the New, have such an uniformity and harmony in them, as well deserveth our special observation; and, if duly considered, helps to illustrate the subject in hand.

Since it is so, that it is by the Holy Ghost always that God sanctifieth his

creatures; surely nothing is more just than a devout acknowledgment of this in divine worship, in prayers and praises for grace, by asking of God his Spirit, and blessing him for such an inestimable gift. It is a most reasonable acknowledgment, because it is an acknowledgment of the truth, of a very important truth. It is a part of devotion and godliness, because he is not a creature, (as appears plainly from Scripture,) but a Person in the Godhead. And in effect, (not to insist on all the proofs of his divinity,) one would think it were easy to see that the omnipresence and vast sufficiency of power necessarily supposed in the Spirit's operations are absolutely incompatible with the finite nature of a creature: considering that the highest creature must be at an infinite distance below the Creator; and withal that the efficacy of grace in the soul (which is of a far more noble nature than the visible world) is one of the most glorious operations in which Omnipotence exerteth itself.

It is observable, that God in all his works taketh pleasure to use a subordination of various means and instruments, though he could produce them immediately by himself, without such means; yet God does not make it a part of worship and devotion to acknowledge the efficacy of created instruments, (such as, for instance, the ministry of angels,) but only the efficacy of the Holy Ghost sent by himself and his Son: and this is made so requisite, that in the solemn rite by which members are received into the church, they must be baptized in his name: which surely, if considered aright, sheweth of how great importance it is in worship and devotion, and what strong ties baptized persons are under, to acknowledge carefully the efficacy of the adorable Spirit in the work of their salvation.

They that object against the necessity of applying for grace in such a manner as explicitly to acknowledge the efficacy of the Holy Ghost, will probably be much more against the other thing mentioned before, that is, that we should seek the grace of the Spirit out of the fulness that is in the Redeemer. They will look upon this as a strange multiplying of our views in devotion, without any necessity, or use.

But upon a little consideration, supposing once the doctrine of the Trinity, (which

it is better not to enter upon here, than to treat it superficially,) and supposing the doctrine of Christ's sacrifice and merits, which was vindicated before, it is easy to show that the doctrine, just now mentioned, is the most reasonable in the world.

For what more just, than that a person of merit, who has deserved blessings for others who are unworthy of them, should have his purchase put into his own hands, to dispense it to his favourites? The Scripture sheweth that the graces of the Spirit are the fruits of Christ's merits: and on that, and perhaps several other accounts, the Holy Ghost, when he is said to be given to sinners, is called the Spirit of Christ; and we are expressly told, *He shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you*, John xvi. 14. that is (as the word really signifies there) shall give it unto you: it is evident therefore, that being the purchaser of all grace, and having the disposal of it, he should be acknowledged as the source of it.

It may not be improper to reflect here on the observation made before about God's ordinary way of working by a subordination of various means.

This is evident in nothing more than in his way of bestowing many of his favours on us. Though he could bestow them immediately himself, yet he makes even men in many cases instruments of good to one another. Infinite wisdom may have many good reasons for such a way of acting, unknown to us: one remarkable good effect of it we know is this, that it is an excellent foundation and cement of love and friendship among mankind: (and what is there among men more precious or amiable than that is?) Now supposing there were no other reason or necessity for it, yet what more just than that he who showed such incomparable friendship for sinners, as to give himself a sacrifice for their sins, should have the dispensing of grace for them, for performance of duty, and be entrusted with the whole management of their souls? which surely cannot be in more friendly hands. His receiving gifts for men, (as the Scripture expresseth it,) and having all fulness and treasures of wisdom to communicate to them by his Spirit, serveth as an additional means of cementing that incomparable friendship betwixt him and them: Surely to compare the two contrary suppositions that may be

made about this point; that which the Gospel teacheth is far more reasonable than to think that Christ, after having died for his people, never mindeth them more, and never doth any more for them.

To be perpetually employed in giving spiritual light, life, and strength, and joy to his people, we may easily conceive is an office very agreeable to his kind and bountiful nature. When he received gifts for them, and all power was given him, as our Mediator; he received the portion and spoil Isaiah speaks of, which was due to him for vanquishing hell and death; when he giveth these gifts, and seeth them flourish in the souls of redeemed sinners, he sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied. And they must have very little faith or gratitude, who do not think spiritual blessings have the better relish for coming to sinners from such a kindly source, and through such friendly hands: certainly every man that sincerely believes in Christ, findeth additional consolation in spiritual blessings, by reflecting on the way they are derived to him, that they carry along with them the savour of his merits, and the relish of his friendship. In other cases, it is evident, that, besides the intrinsic value of a benefit, the pleasure of it is enhanced, if it come from the hands of a friend, of one to whom we are under strong obligations of love and gratitude otherwise: and surely it ought to be so in this case, above all others.

Besides, this way of seeking and receiving grace has a powerful influence on humility and gratitude, than which there are not two ornaments more becoming a sinful redeemed creature: for by this means, the way of *seeking grace*, doth naturally remind us of our sins, and also of God's mercy, by fixing our view on that great sacrifice, which gives the liveliest impression of both these great objects: And surely to take frequent clear views of these two objects, our guilt that needed such a sacrifice, and God's infinite love that provided it, is the way to promote that humility and gratitude, which have such a necessary connexion with repentance, faith in Christ, and the love of God, and all other graces whatsoever.

REV. J. MACLAURIN.

What is dearer to God the Father than his only Son? And what diviner blessing has he to bestow upon men than his Holy

Spirit? Yet has he given his Son for us, and by the hands of his Son he confers his blessed Spirit on us. *Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, shed it forth on men*, Acts ii. 33.

How the wondrous doctrine of the blessed Trinity shines through the whole of our religion, and sheds a glory upon every part of it! Here is God the Father, a king of infinite riches and glory, has constituted his beloved Son the high treasurer of heaven, and the Holy Spirit is the divine and inestimable treasure. What amazing doctrines of sacred love are written in our Bibles! What mysteries of mercy, what miracles of glory are these! Our boldest desires, and most raised hopes durst never aim at such blessings; there is nothing in all nature that can lead us to a thought of such grace.

The Spirit was given by the Father to the Son for men; for rebellious and sinful men, to make favorites and saints of them: this was the noble gift the Son received when he ascended on high. *And he distributed it to grace his triumph*, Psalm lxxviii. 18.

Was it not a divine honor which Jesus our Lord displayed on that day when the tongues of fire sat on his twelve apostles; when he sent his ambassadors to every nation to address them in their own language, to notify his accession to the throne of heaven, and to demand subjection to his government? When he conferred power upon his envoys to reverse the laws of nature, and imitate creation? To give eyes to the blind, and to raise the dead? All this was done by the Spirit, which he sent down upon them in the days of Pentecost.

But is this Spirit given to none but his apostles and the prime ministers in his kingdom? Was that rich treasure exhausted in the first ages of the Gospel, and none left for us? God forbid! Every one of his subjects has the same favor bestowed upon them, though not in the same degree: every humble and holy soul in our day, every true Christian is possessed of his Spirit; for, *he that has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. And wherever this Spirit is, it works miracles too; it changes the sinner to a saint, it opens his blind eyes, it new creates his nature; it raises the dead to a divine life, and teaches Egypt and Assyria, and the British isles, to speak the language of Canaan. It is this gift of the Spirit which

the Son sends down to us continually from the Father, that is the original and spring of all these strange blessings. . . .

The Father, what a glorious giver! The Son, what a glorious medium of communication! and the Spirit, what a glorious gift! We blush and adore while we partake of such immense favors, and gratitude is even overwhelmed with wonder.

O let our spirits rejoice in this blessed article of our religion! and may all the temptations that we meet with from men of reason, never, never baffle so sweet a faith!

DR. WATTS.

The way in which the Spirit acts on the Human Will.

THE judgment is never thoroughly enlightened to understand spiritual things in that immediate and ample beauty and goodness which is in them, but only by the Spirit of Christ, which maketh a man to have the self-same mind, judgment, opinion, and apprehension of heavenly things which he had; so that Christ and a Christian do τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν, *think the same thing*, as the apostle speaks, Phil. ii. 5. By the which Spirit of grace, working first upon the judgment to rectify that, and to convince it of the evidence and necessity of that most universal and adequate good which it presenteth, the whole nature is proportionably renewed, and Christ formed as well in the will and affections as in the understanding. As the body in the womb is not shaped by piecemeal, one part after another, but altogether by proportionable degrees and progresses of perfection. So that at the same time when the Spirit of grace, by an act of heavenly illumination, is present with the judgment of reason to evidence, not the truth only, but the *excellency of the knowledge of Christ* thereunto, it is likewise present by an act of heavenly persuasion, and most intimate allurements unto the will and affections, sweetly accommodating its working unto the exigence and condition of the faculties, that they likewise may with such liberty and complacency as becomes both their own nature, and the quality of obedience required, apply themselves to the desire and prosecution of those excellent things which are with so spiritual an evidence set forth unto them in the ministry of the Word. As by the same soul the eye seeth, and the ear heareth, and the hand worketh: so when Christ by his Spirit is

formed in us, (for the Spirit of Christ is the *actus primus*, or soul of a Christian man, that which animateth him unto an heavenly being and working,) every power of the soul and body is in some proportionable measure enabled to work, in such manner as is convenient and proper to the quality of its nature, to the right apprehension and voluntary prosecution of spiritual things. The same Spirit, which by

the word of grace doth fully convince the judgment, and let the *light of the knowledge of the glory of God shine* upon the mind, doth by the same word of grace proportionably excite, and assist the will to affect it, that as the understanding is elevated to the spiritual perception, so the will likewise is enabled to the spiritual love of heavenly things.

BP. REYNOLDS.

SECTION V.—THE TRINITY.

This Doctrine proved and enforced by Scripture.

BUT that I may unveil this mystery, and confirm this truth more clearly, we will consider each person distinctly, and show, that one as well as the other is really and truly God.

That the Father is God, none ever denied, and therefore we need not prove it. But if the Father be God, the Son must needs be God too; for the same names, properties, works, and worship, which in Scripture are ascribed to the Father, are frequently ascribed to the Son also in Scripture. The Father is called Jehovah in Scripture, so is the Son, Hos. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 6. Father is called God, so is the Son, John i. 1; *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*; with God as to his person, God as to his nature. So also John xx. 28; Acts xx. 28. Moreover is the Father Alpha and Omega, the first and the last? so is the Son, Rev. i. 8—Is the Father eternal? so is the Son, Isa. ix. 6; Rev. i. 8—Is the Father almighty? so is the Son, Heb. i. 3—Is the Father every where? so is the Son, Matt. xviii. 20—Doth the Father know all things? so doth the Son, John xxi. 17; ii. 24—Did the Father make all things? so did the Son, John i. 3—Doth the Father preserve all things? so doth the Son, Heb. i. 3—Doth the Father forgive sins? so doth the Son, Matt. ix. 6—Is the Father to be worshipped? so is the Son, Heb. i. 6—Is the Father to be honored? so is the Son, John v. 23. No wonder therefore that Christ, *being thus in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*. He did not rob God of any glory by saying that himself was equal to him. The

greatest wonder is how any one can believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, and yet deny this great truth, than which nothing can be more plain from Scripture; nothing being more frequently and more clearly asserted than this is. And, verily, it is well for us that it is so; for if Christ were not God, neither could he be our Saviour; none being able to free us from our sins, but only he against whom they were committed. And therefore I cannot imagine how any one can doubt of Christ's divinity, and yet expect pardon and salvation from him; all our hopes and expectations from him depending only upon his assumption of our human nature into a divine Person.

And that the Holy Ghost also is God, is frequently asserted in the holy Scriptures which himself indited. Indeed his very inditing of the Scriptures was a clear argument of his Deity, as well as the Scriptures indited by him. What man, what angel, what creature, who but God could compose such articles of faith, enjoin such divine precepts, foretel and fulfil such prophecies, as in Scripture are contained? Who spake unto or by the prophets? Whom did they mean, when they said, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*? Who was this Lord of hosts that instructed them what to speak or write? Was it God the Father, or God the Son? No, but it was God the Holy Ghost; *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, 2 Pet. i. 21; Acts xxviii. 25; xxi. 11. The Holy Ghost therefore being the Lord of hosts, he must needs be God, there being no person that is or can be called the Lord of hosts, but he that is the very and eternal God. This also may be ga-

thered from 1 Cor. iii. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* for none can be the temple of God, but he in whom God dwells; for it is God's dwelling in a place that makes that place the temple of God; and yet we are here said to be the temple of God, because the Spirit dwelleth in us. And so elsewhere; *Know ye not*, saith the apostle, *that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost that is in you?* which could not be unless the Holy Ghost was God. Another express Scripture we have for it in Acts v. 3, 4; where St. Peter propounds this question to Ananias, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?* and then tells him in the next verse, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God:* and so expressly asserts the Holy Ghost to be God.

Moreover, that the Holy Ghost is truly God, co-equal to the Father and Son, is plain, in that the Scriptures assert him to be, to have, and to do whatsoever the Father or Son is, hath, or doth, as God. For is the Father and Son eternal? so is the Spirit, Heb. ix. 14—Is God the Father and Son every where? so is the Spirit, Psal. cxxxix. 7—Is God the Father and the Son a wise, understanding, powerful, and knowing God? so is the Spirit, Isa. xi. 2—Are we baptized in the name of the Father and the Son? so are we baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost—May we sin against the Father and the Son? so may we sin too against the Holy Ghost; nay, the sin against this Person only is accounted by our Saviour to be a sin never to be pardoned, Matt. xii. 31, 32. We may sin against God the Father, and our sin may be pardoned: we may sin against God the Son, and our sin may be pardoned; but if we sin or speak against the Holy Ghost, that shall *never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor yet in that which is to come.* But if the Holy Ghost be not God, how can we sin against him? or how comes our sin against him only to be unpardonable, unless he be God? I know it is not therefore unpardonable because he is God, for then the sins against the Father and the Son would be unpardonable too, seeing they both are God as well as he; yet, though this sin is not therefore unpardonable, because he is God, yet it could not be unpardonable unless he was God. For, supposing him not to be God but a creature, and yet the

sin against him to be unpardonable, then the sin against a creature would be unpardonable, when sins against God himself are pardoned; which is to say, would itself, I think, come near to the sin against the Holy Ghost. But seeing our Saviour describes this unpardonable sin, by blaspheming or speaking against the Holy Ghost, let them have a care that they be not found guilty of it, who dare deny the Holy Ghost to be really and truly God, and so blaspheme and speak the worst that they can against him.

We have seen what ground we have to believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, and that every one of these persons is God; we are now to consider the order of those persons in the Trinity, described in the words before us; first the Father, and then the Son, and then the Holy Ghost; every one of which is really and truly God; and yet they are all but one real and true God—a mystery which we are all bound to believe, but yet must have great care how we speak of it; it being both easy and dangerous to mistake in expressing so mysterious a truth as this is. If we think of it, how hard is it to contemplate upon one numerically divine nature, in more than one and the same divine person; or upon three divine persons in no more than one and the same divine nature! If we speak of it, how hard is it to find out fit words to express it! If I say, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be three, and every one distinctly God, it is true; but if I say, they be three and every one a distinct God, it is false. I may say, the divine persons are distinct in the divine nature; but I cannot say, that the divine nature is divided into the divine persons. I may say, God the Father is one God, and the Son is one God, and the Holy Ghost is one God; but I cannot say, that the Father is one God, and the Son another God, and the Holy Ghost a third God. I may say, the Father begat another who is God; yet I cannot say, that he begat another God. And from the Father and the Son proceedeth another who is God; yet I cannot say, from the Father and the Son proceedeth another God. For, all this while, though their nature be the same, their persons are distinct; and though their persons be distinct, still their nature is the same; so that though the Father be the first Person in the God-

head, the Son the second, the Holy Ghost the third, yet the Father is not the first, the Son a second, the Holy Ghost a third God. So hard a thing is it to word so great a mystery aright; or to fit so high a truth with expressions suitable and proper to it, without going one way or another from it. And therefore I shall not use many words about it, lest some should slip from me unbecoming of it; but, in as few terms as I can, I will endeavor to show, upon what account the Father is the first, the Son the second, and the Holy Ghost the third person in the Trinity.

First, therefore, the Father is placed first, and really is the first Person, not as if he were before the other two, for they are all co-eternal, but because the other two received their essence from him; for the Son was begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeded both from the Father and Son; and therefore the Father is termed by the primitive Christians, the Root and the Fountain of Deity. As in waters there is the fountain or well-head, then there is the spring that boils up out of that fountain, and then there is the stream that flows both from the fountain and the spring, and yet all these are but one and the same water; so here, God the Father is the fountain of Deity, the Son as the spring that boils up out of the fountain, and the Holy Ghost that flows from both, and yet all three are but one and the same God. The same may be also explained by another familiar instance. The sun, you know, begets beams, and from the sun and beams together proceed both light and heat; so God the Father begets the Son, and from the Father and Son together proceeds the Spirit of knowledge and grace. But as the sun is not before the beams, nor the beams before the light and heat, but all are together; so neither is the Father before the Son, nor Father or Son before the Holy Ghost, but only in order and relation to one another; in which only respect, the Father is the first Person in the Trinity.

Secondly, the Son is the second Person, who is called the Son, yea, and the only-begotten Son of God, because he was begotten of the Father, not as others are by spiritual regeneration, but by eternal generation, as none but himself is. . . . For the Person of the Son was most certainly begotten of the Father, otherwise he would not be his Son; but his essence

was unbegotten, otherwise he would not be God: and therefore the highest apprehensions that we can frame of this great mystery, the eternal generation of the Son of God, is only by conceiving the Person of the Father to have communicated his divine essence to the Person of the Son, and so of himself begetting his other self the Son, by communicating his own eternal and unbegotten essence to him—I say, by communicating of his essence, not of his person to him, for then they would be both the same person, as now they are of the same essence. The essence of the Father did not beget the son by communicating his person to him, but the person of the Father begat the Son by communicating his essence to him; so that the person of the Son is begotten, not communicated; but the essence of the Son is communicated, not begotten.

This notion of the Father's begetting the Son by communicating his essence to him, I ground upon the Son's own words, who certainly best knew how himself was begotten; *For as the Father, saith he, hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*, John v. 26. To have life in himself is an essential property of the Divine nature, and therefore whosoever that is given or communicated, the nature itself must needs be given and communicated too. Now here we see how God the Father communicated this his essential property, and so his essence, to the Son; and, by consequence, though he be a distinct person from him, yet he hath the same unbegotten essence with him; and therefore, as the Father hath life in himself, so hath the Son life in himself, and so all other essential properties of the Divine nature, only with this personal distinction, that the Father hath life in himself, not from the Son, but from himself; whereas the Son hath it, not from himself, but from the Father: or, the Father is God of himself, not of the Son; the Son is the same God, but from the Father, not from himself; and therefore, not the Father, but the Son, is rightly called by the council of Nice, "God of God, Light of Light," yea, "very God of very God."

Thirdly; having thus spoken of the two first persons in the sacred Trinity, we now come to the last, the Holy Ghost—the last, I say, not in nature or time, but only in order; for as to their nature, one

is not better or more God than another; neither as to time, is one before another, none of them being measured by time, but all and every one of them eternity itself. But though not in nature or time, yet in order one must needs be before another: for the Father is of himself, receiving his essence neither from the Son nor from the Spirit, and therefore is in order before both; the Son received his essence from the Father, not from the Spirit, and therefore in order is before the Spirit, as well as after the Father; but the Spirit receiving his essence both from the Father and the Son, must needs in order be after both. I confess, the Spirit is no where in Scripture said to proceed from the Son, and therefore the inserting of this into the Nicene creed was the occasion of that schism betwixt the western and eastern churches, which hath now continued for many ages; in which, I think, both parties are blame-worthy—the western churches for inserting this clause following into the Nicene creed, without the consent of a general council; and the eastern for denying so plain a truth as this is; for though the Spirit be not said to proceed from the Son, yet he is called *the Spirit of the Son*, which questionless he would never have been, did not he proceed from the Son as well as from the Father. And, verily, the Father communicating his own individual essence, and so whatsoever he is, his paternal relation excepted, to the Son, could not but communicate this to him also, even to have the Spirit proceeding from him as it doth from himself. So that as whatsoever the Father hath originally in himself, that hath the Son by communication from the Father, so hath the Son this, the Spirit's proceeding from him by communication from the Father, as the Father hath it in himself; and the Spirit thus proceeding both from the Father and the Son, hence it is that he is placed after both, in Matt. xxviii. 19; and so elsewhere.

From what I have hitherto discoursed concerning this great mystery, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity, I shall gather some few inferences, and so conclude.

1. Is the Son God, yea, the same God with the Father? Hence I observe, what a strange mystery the work of man's redemption is, that God himself should become man—and he that was begotten of

his Father, without a mother, from eternity, should be born of his mother, without a father, in time—that he who was perfect God, like unto the Father in every thing, his personal properties only excepted, should also be perfect man, like unto us in all things, our personal infirmities only excepted—that he that made the world, should be himself made in it—that eternity should stoop to time, glory be wrapt in misery, and the Sun of righteousness hid under a clod of earth—that innocence should be betrayed, justice condemned, and life itself should die, and all to redeem man from death to life! O wonder of wonders! how justly may we say with the apostle, *Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness!*

2. Is the Spirit also God? Hence I observe, that it is God alone that can make us holy; for seeing the Scripture all along ascribes our sanctification unto the Spirit of God, and yet the Spirit of God is himself really and truly God, it necessarily followeth, that the special concurrence and influence of the Almighty God himself is necessary to the making us really and truly holy.

3. Are all three persons in the Trinity one and the same God? Hence I infer, they are to have one and the same honor conferred upon them, and one and the same worship performed unto them; or, as our Saviour himself saith, *that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father*, John v. 23: and, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, John xiv. 1. And as we pray to the Father, so should we pray to the Son too, as the apostles did, Luke xvii. 5; and St. Stephen, Acts vii. 59; and St. Paul to all the three persons, 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

BP. BEVERIDGE.

Reasonableness of our Belief of the Trinity, in a Dialogue between a Papist and a Protestant.

P. I shall reduce these difficulties to two, which comprehend the rest.

1. How there can be three Persons and but one God.

2. How these can agree in a third, and not agree among themselves.

For the first, it seems very absurd, that there should be three Persons really distinct, whereof every one is God, and yet there should not be three Gods; for nothing is more contradictory than to make

three not to be three, or three to be but one.

Pr. I hope now you will give me leave to make an answer to your difficulty as distinct as possible. We do not say that three persons are but one person, or that one nature is three natures; but that there are three persons in one nature. If therefore one individual nature be communicable to three persons, there is no appearance of absurdity in this doctrine. And on the other side, it will be impossible there should be three Gods, where there is one and the same individual nature; for three Gods must have three several divine natures, since it is the divine essence which makes a God. But to make this more plain, do you make any difference between *nature* and *person*?

P. Yes.

Pr. Wherein lies it?

P. Excuse me, sir, for you have undertaken to explain these things.

Pr. I will begin with *person*. Which name was originally taken among the Romans from some remarkable distinction of one from another, either by some outward appearance, as a vizard or habit, or some particular quality or disposition. And from hence it came to be applied to those inward properties, whereby one intelligent being is distinguished from another; and from those properties, to the person who had them. Thus *person* is used even by Tully himself at least twenty times in his books of Rhetoric; and the old civil law speaks of *personal rights* and *personal actions*. So that the critics, such as Valla, and others, had no cause to find fault with Boethius for applying the notion of a person to an 'intelligent being subsisting in itself,' (and so the soul is no person in men, but the man consisting of soul and body,) 'having some incommunicable properties belonging to him:' therefore I cannot but wonder at the niceness of some late men, who would have the names of *person*, and *hypostasis*, and *Trinity*, to be laid aside, since themselves confess Boethius his definition of a person to be true enough; but they say, 'it belongs to the creatures, and not to God, for it would make three Gods.' Which is to suppose, without proving it, that the Divine nature can communicate itself after no other manner than a created nature can.

This is now to be more strictly inquired into. And it is very well observed by

Boethius, *de Trin.* l. i. *Principium pluralitatis alteritas est*: 'That diversity is the reason of plurality:' and therefore in the Trinity, so far as they are different, they are three, i. e. in regard of personal properties and relations; but so far as they agree, they are but ONE, that is, as to the Divine nature.

It is very true, that, according to arithmetic, three cannot be one, nor one three; but we must distinguish between the bare numeration and the things numbered. The repetition of three units certainly makes three distinct numbers; but it doth not make three persons to be three natures. And therefore, as to the things themselves, we must go from the bare numbers, to consider their nature. Wherever there is a real distinction, we may multiply the number, though the subject be but one. As, suppose we say the soul hath three faculties; understanding, will, and memory; we may, without the least absurdity, say, there are three and one; and those three not confounded with each other, and yet there is but one soul.

P. But the Socinians object, that there is a difference between three properties and three distinct persons; because a person is an individual being; and so three persons must be three individual beings; and therefore as there is but one Divine Being, there can be but one Person.

Pr. This is the main strength of the cause; to which I answer, that although a person be an individual being, yet it implies two things in it: (1.) Something common with others of the same nature; as three men have one and the same nature, though they be three persons. (2.) Something peculiar and incommunicate to any other; so that John cannot be Peter, nor Peter, James.

P. But what is it which makes one not to be the other, when they have the same common nature?

Pr. You ask a hard question, viz. about the principle of individuation; but if it be so hard to resolve it, as to created beings, there is certainly far less reason for us to be unsatisfied, if it appear difficult to clear the difference of nature and person in an infinite Being. Yet all mankind are agreed in the thing, viz. That there is a community of the same nature, and a real distinction of persons among men, though they cannot tell what that is which discriminates the human nature in John, from the same human nature in Peter and James.

And it is observable, that, as beings arise in perfection above each other, it is still so much harder to assign that which is called the principle of individuation. In gross and material beings we can discern a number of accidents, or peculiar modes and properties, which distinguish them from each other; but it is much harder to assign it in spiritual and intellectual beings, whose natures and differences lie not so open to our understandings. If so be then it appears more difficult in an infinite and incomprehensible Being, what cause have we to wonder at it?

But we must always make a difference between what we have reason to believe, and what we have a power to conceive. Although we have all the reason in the world to believe that there is a God, i. e. a Being infinite in all perfections; yet we must yield, that his essential attributes are above our comprehension. As for instance:

(1.) We must believe God to be eternal, or we cannot believe him to be God; for if he once were not, it is impossible he should ever be; and therefore we conclude necessary existence to be an essential attribute of the Divine nature: but then, how to conceive that a being should be from itself, is at least as hard, as how one and the same individual nature should be communicated to three distinct persons; nay, it is somewhat harder, since we see something like this in other beings, but we can see no manner of resemblance of a thing that hath its being wholly from itself.

(2.) We must allow God to be omnipresent, or else we must suppose him so confined and limited to a certain place, as to be excluded from any other; and if he can act in all places, he must either be present in them, or his power must be larger than his being, which is infinite; but after this, we have not a power to conceive how a Being should be present in the whole world, and not to be extended; and if it be extended, how it should be incapable of being divided into parts, which is certainly repugnant to the divine nature. I therefore produce these two instances, to let the Anti-Trinitarians see, that what they object in point of reason, as to the incomprehensibility of the mystery of the Trinity, will in consequence overthrow the divine nature. But as there is the highest reason to believe there is a God, though we cannot comprehend his perfections, so there may be great reason

to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, though we cannot comprehend the manner of it.

P. I had thought you intended to explain the mystery of it, and now you tell us it is incomprehensible.

Pr. It is a good step to our believing it, to make it plain, that the difficulty of our conception ought not to hinder our faith. And I have made some advance towards the explication of it, by showing, that since mankind are agreed about the difference between *nature* and *person*, the whole difficulty comes to this, that the same common nature in mankind makes three persons; but that it is the same individual nature in all the persons of the Trinity.

And now let us consider the infinite perfection and simplicity of the divine nature; and we shall think it unreasonable that it should be bounded as to the manner of its communication, as the nature of man is. Every individual man hath not only individual properties, but an individual nature, i. e. the common nature of man, limited by some unaccountable principle, that doth make him different from all other men having the same nature with himself. The difficulty then doth not lie in a community of nature, and a distinction of persons, for that is granted among men; but in the unity of nature with the difference of persons. And supposing the Divine nature to be infinite in its perfection, I do not see how it is capable of being bounded as the common nature of man in individuals is; and if it be not capable of being bounded and limited, it must diffuse itself into all the persons in the same individual manner; and so this doctrine of the Trinity is not repugnant to reason.

P. But what say you to the Athanasian creed; is not that repugnant to human reason?

Pr. I think not; but that it is a just explication of the doctrine of the Trinity rightly understood.

P. I see, now you are upon hard points, you will stick at nothing, and transubstantiation itself will down with you anon.

Pr. I doubt not; but at present we are upon the Athanasian creed. And I desire but one principle to clear it, which follows from what is said already, viz. That what is affirmed of the Divine nature, as such, must be common to all three Persons; but whatever is affirmed of the seve-

ral Persons, as such, must be peculiar to themselves. Now this is a clear principle of reason, and hath no appearance of absurdity in it. And from hence the Athanasian creed will easily be cleared. For *eternity, incomprehensibility, omnipotency*, belonging to the Divine nature, as such, we ought to say, *That they are not three Eternals, three Incomprehensibles, three Almighty: but one Eternal, one Incomprehensible, one Almighty*. Because the attributes belonging to the Persons, by reason of the Divine nature, and the attributes being really the same with it, the nature is the proper subject of them, which being but one, we are not to distinguish them as to essential attributes, but only as to personal relations and properties.

P. But if the three Persons be coeternal, how is it possible to conceive there should not be three eternals?

Pr. This seems the hardest expression in the whole creed; but it is to be interpreted by the scope and design of it, which is, that the essential attributes are not to be distinguished, though the Persons be. And so eternity is not taken as a personal attribute, but as essential; and so *they are not three Eternals, but one Eternal*. And the great design of the creed was, to show, that the Christian church did not believe such a Trinity as consisted of three Persons, unequal and different in nature, and substance, and duration.

P. But what say you to the damning all those who do not believe it, in the beginning and end of it?

Pr. This is off from our business. But to let you see I will not avoid the difficulties you offer, I will give you an answer even to this. The meaning is not, that every one is damned who doth not conceive aright of the difference of nature and person in the Trinity, or of the essential and personal attributes; but that those who set up in opposition to it the worship of a mere creature as God, or the worship of more gods than one, or who wilfully reject this article of the Christian faith, when it is duly proposed to them, are guilty of a damning sin. For even the disbelief of Christianity itself is not supposed to be the cause of men's damnation, but where the doctrine of the gospel hath been proposed in a way of credibility. If, when this doctrine of the Trinity is proposed to men's minds, they will not consider it, nor weigh the arguments on both sides impar-

tially, but with scorn and contempt reject it, and endeavour to bring reproach upon Christianity for the sake of it, and disturb the peace of the church about it; such cannot be said to receive or believe it faithfully, and by such sins they do run the hazard of perishing everlastingly.

P. I see you have a mind to smooth every thing relating to the Trinity; I wish you would do the same about transubstantiation. But yet you have not answered the other great difficulty in point of reason, viz. That those things which agree or disagree in a third, must agree or disagree with the other. And therefore if the Father be God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, then the Father must be Son and Holy Ghost, and the Son and Holy Ghost must be the Father. If not, then they are really the same, and really distinct; the same as to essence, distinct as to persons; and so they are the same, and not the same, which is a contradiction.

Pr. And now I think you have drawn out the most refined spirits of Socinianism, to make the doctrine of the Trinity and transubstantiation parallel, because you say, it implies a contradiction, which is the nearest parallel you have yet offered at. But this terrible argument is grounded on the same supposition, viz. That the divine essence is no more capable of communicating itself to three distinct persons, than any created being is. The reason of that axiom being, that created things, by reason of their finite nature, cannot diffuse or communicate themselves to more than one; and therefore those which agree in a third, must agree together; but supposing it possible that the same finite nature could extend itself to several individuals, it would be presently answered, the axiom did hold only where they did adequately and reciprocally agree, and not where they did agree only in essence, but differed in the manner of subsistence. For where a different manner of subsistence is supposed possible in the same individual nature, the agreement in that cannot take away that difference which is consistent with it, which we attribute to the unlimitedness and perfection of the divine nature.

P. But you can bring no other instance but the thing in question; and therefore this is a *petitio principii*, or taking that for granted which is in dispute.

Pr. I do not think it to be so, where

the reason is assigned from the peculiar properties of the divine nature, to which there can be no parallel. And I think it very unreasonable in the Socinians, to send us to created beings for the rules and measures of our judgment concerning a Being acknowledged to be infinite.

P. Are not the divine Persons infinite, as well as the divine nature? and therefore as created persons do take in the whole nature, so infinite persons will do the infinite nature.

Pr. No question, but the persons are infinite in regard of the nature which is so; but if an infinite nature be communicable to more persons than one, every such person cannot appropriate the whole nature to itself.

P. If the difference be on the account of infinity, then there must be an infinite number of persons in the divine essence.

Pr. I answer, That infiniteness of number is no perfection; and as to the number of persons, we follow not our own conjectures, nor the authority of the church; but divine revelation, which hath assured us, that there is but *one God*, and yet *there are three that are one*; which depends not merely on the place of St. John, but the form of baptism is remarkable to this purpose, which joins together *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, without any other distinction besides that of order and relation. And it is against the fundamental design of Christianity to join any created beings together with God in so solemn an act of religion. And St. Paul joins them together in his benediction; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14. From whence the Christian Church hath always believed a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Divine Nature.

BP. STILLINGFLEET.

Necessity and use of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

If you consider man in the state under which the Scripture represents him, lost to God and to himself, the slave of passion, and the servant of sin, equally unable to govern himself, and to serve his Maker; you will then see the want there was of a Mediator, to be the Ambassador of our peace, and to reconcile us to God; you will then see the want there was of the Holy Spirit's influence to enable us to subdue

those unruly passions and appetites, which were a partition-wall between us and our God; that we might serve our Maker in spirit and in truth, and *perfect holiness in the fear of God.*

Give me leave to stay here a little, to represent to you the economy of God in the gospel dispensation, which the apostle, in the text, has shut up in a few words; *We have access to God, through Christ, by the Spirit.* To give you a distinct conception of this, and of the different offices of the Son and of the Spirit, you must conceive the Spirit of God as always present with us; the Son, as always in the presence of the Father. The Spirit dwells with the faithful, to guide and to direct them, to second and encourage all their good desires, to help them in overcoming their infirmities; in a word, to labour together with them in the work of their salvation, to make their calling and election sure. The Son of God is at the right hand of the Majesty on high; there he is our Advocate; he intercedes for us, he receives and offers up our prayers, he obtains for us the remission of our sins in virtue of the one oblation which he once made of himself upon the cross, the memorial of which is ever in the sight of God. This will teach us what it is to *have access by the Spirit, through Christ.* For the Spirit abideth with us, he is at our right hand, and by his happy influence it is that we draw near to Christ, and by him approach to the Father. The Son is our High-priest, clothed with majesty and power, and seated at the right hand of God, able to save all who will come to him; through whose powerful and always prevailing mediation and intercession the way is opened to pardon and reconciliation. The Spirit is our Comforter, given us to dwell and to abide with us, to be a principle of new life within us, to *quicken our mortal bodies*, that, dying to sin, we may live unto God through holiness. To draw men to God is the work of the Spirit, who therefore resides and dwells with men; to reconcile God to man is the work of our High-priest, who lives in the glory of God, making continual intercession for us.

And now, consider the calamitous condition of mankind under what view you please, you will always find a proper remedy provided by the mercy of God. If you reflect upon the holiness of God, and

his hatred of sin and iniquity, and begin to fear that he can never be reconciled to sinners; take courage: the work is difficult, but the Son of God has undertaken it; and how great soever the distance between God and you is, yet through the Son you may have access unto him. If still you fear for yourself that all may again be lost, through your own weakness, and inability to do good; even here help is at hand, the Spirit of God is your support; he is the pledge and earnest of your redemption. But, these being the necessary means of salvation, it was likewise necessary to reveal to the world the doctrines concerning the Son and the Holy Spirit: and the belief of these doctrines is necessary to every Christian, as far as the right use of the means depends upon the right faith and belief of the doctrines. *He that hath the Son, (says St. John) hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;* and again, *Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father.* For since we can only come to the Father through the Son, to deny the Son is to cut off all communication between us and the Father. The same may be said of the blessed Spirit, through whom we are in Christ: *If any man (says St. Paul) have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:* our blessed Lord has himself told us, that *This is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.*

When we were to be put under the conduct of the Spirit, and all our hopes depended upon our obedience to, and compliance with, his holy motions; was it not necessary to inform us who this Spirit is? to let us know that he is sufficient to the office allotted him: that, knowing perfectly the mind of God, even as the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man, he is able fully to instruct us and to direct us in the ways of God; that, being infinite, and unconfined in time or place, he is equal to the extensive charge committed to his care, and can be ready at all times, and in all places, to succour the faithful servants of God; that, being the *Spirit of power and of might*, he is able to rescue us out of all dangers, and protect us against all the powers and principalities of the kingdom of darkness? It may be hard perhaps to human reason to conceive, that this Holy Spirit is the eternal Spirit of God, and so intimately united with God,

as to know the mind of God as perfectly as the spirit of a man which is in him knoweth the mind of man; but it would be harder still to believe that the Spirit could do what is ascribed to him in Scripture, without believing him to be this great and glorious Person. It is a more rational act of faith, to expect from the Eternal Spirit of God the sanctification of our souls and bodies, spiritual aid and assistance in all our trials and temptations, and whatever else is necessary to our salvation, than it would be to expect the same things from any other spirit, of whose power and attributes we knew nothing. The power and mightiness of the Spirit, made known to us by God, is a reasonable, a just foundation for the hope and confidence we have in him; but, were we ignorant of his power, our trust in him would be without ground; and we should lose this boasting, which is now the glory of our faith, that *we know in whom we have believed.* Since, therefore, by the determinate counsel of God, the redemption of the world was to be the work of his Son, and the sanctification of it the work of his Spirit; he has dealt with us more like reasonable creatures, in declaring to us the dignity and power of the Persons in whom we are to trust, than he would have done, had he required of us the same faith and reliance on those Persons, without declaring to us how able and powerful they are to help us. If therefore it be reasonable for God to save the world, by redeeming it by his Son, by sanctifying it by his Holy Spirit, it cannot be unreasonable for him to make known his Son and his Spirit to the world, that all men every where may by the one Spirit of God, and through the only Son of God, approach to the Father. And this shows how foolishly men charge God, when they complain of the heavy imposition laid upon their faith and their understanding by the Gospel doctrines concerning the Son and the Holy Spirit. God has revealed this for our sakes only, not for matter of speculation, or for the enlarging of our knowledge; but that, having a reasonable ground of assurance and hope in him, we may, through faith and patient abiding, inherit the promises. BR. SHERLOCK.

How this Doctrine has suffered from its Defenders as well as Adversaries.

It is to be feared, that the doctrine of

the Trinity has suffered from its defenders as well as from its adversaries. The moment we attempt to clear up a difficulty which the Scriptures have not cleared, that moment we abandon our only safe guide, and plunge into the darkness of error. Most persons, we think, will have found fewer difficulties in the Scriptural statements on this subject, though they attempt not to explain the mystery, than in any human writings. Yet the adversaries of the doctrine compelled the church to the adoption of such a statement as the Athanasian Creed, to protect Christians from the sophistries of subtle and artful objectors. Humble and simple minds have found few difficulties in the reception of the Trinity. They take the practical and experimental view of the subject which is far more clear and satisfactory than the scholastic, systematic, speculative view of many orthodox statements, such as those of Waterland and others. It is never stated as a mere speculative dogma, however important, but in connexion with our own privileges and duties, as the objects of our faith and worship, Matt. xxviii. 19. as the source of all spiritual blessings, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Rev. i. 4, 5. as bearing their respective parts in the divine economy in every act of approach to God, Eph. ii. 18. We would not wholly decry the human attempts to set forth the doctrine; yet the clearest scholastic exhibition is far inferior in distinctness to the simple experimental view which is developed in the believer's spiritual apprehension of the gospel. We would not despise the light of a candle, though obscured with comparative dimness, but we would rather go to the sun for light, and we should justly expect to find not only a wide difference in the clearness of our views, but also in the vivifying effect resulting from them.

REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

The Gracious Method of Co-operation of Three Persons in Jehovah in our Salvation.

1. We should set our mind on God the Father, before the foundation of the world from all eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the creation of us, and communication of his own image to us; endowing us with most excellent faculties of body and soul; subjecting the visible world to our use and governance; placing us in a state of great accommodation and delight;

permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better condition, resolving to send his own dear Son from his bosom to procure and purchase the redemption of mankind; preparing and disposing the world for the reception of so great a mercy, by a general testification of his patience and beneficence, (*giving showers, and fruitful seasons, and filling the hearts of men with food and gladness*, Acts xiv. 17.) but more especially by prophetic promises, predictions, and prefigurations; also suffering the generality of mankind so to proceed in its ways, as might render it sensible of its error and unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a deliverance; *then in the fulness of time, when the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery*, Gal. iv. 4, Rom. viii. 22, actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with human flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by miraculous works, might instruct us by his heavenly doctrine and holy life in our duty, and the terms of our salvation; then freely delivering him over unto death, and accepting his passion as a sacrifice expiating our sins, and meriting his favor toward us: then raising him as *the first fruits* from the dead, setting him at his right hand, investing him with authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his Holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of truth and righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent passages of gracious Providence, ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his mercy; to be inflamed with love of his goodness; to be possessed with gratitude toward him; to become thoroughly devoted to his service.

2. We should likewise mind the blessed Son of God concurring with his Father in all his purposes of love and mercy toward us, in making all things, and sustaining them by the word of his power; but especially in his (toward the freeing us from the desperate miseries, corruptions, and slaveries, into which we were plunged) assuming human nature, leading therein a troublesome and toilsome life, for our benefit and instruction; undergoing a

bitter and shameful death, for the atonement of our sins, and reconciliation of us to divine favor; purchasing great and precious promises, procuring high and glorious privileges for us; ascending into heaven to prepare us mansions of bliss; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold blessings upon us: the astonishing miracles of goodness, of wisdom, of condescension and patience, displayed in the management of which undertakings for us, what heart can well conceive, what tongue can utter? What amazement should it produce in us to consider the brightest efflux of divine glory eclipsing and shrouding itself under so dark a cloud of mortal frailty; the Most High stooping into the quality of so mean a creature; the first-born, and heir-apparent of heaven descending from his throne of eternal majesty, and voluntarily degrading himself into the *form of a servant*, worn with labor and travel, exposed to contempt and disgrace! To reflect upon the great Creator and sovereign Lord of all the world, who reared the heavens, and founded the earth, who possesseth and upholdeth all things, needing himself a shelter, pinched with want, taking alms from his slaves, and paying tribute to his subjects: to contemplate the Son of God willingly *styling* himself the *Son of Man*, really subjecting himself to the duties, the necessities, the infirmities of human nature; suffering the coarsest hardships, and extremest disasters thereof; all this upon freest choice, and with full contentment, and perfect submission to so mean and so distasteful a condition.

We may observe with how admirable goodness he did vouchsafe to converse with a froward generation of men, to instruct a stupid and indocile sort of people, with all sorts of beneficence to oblige an incredulous, insensible, and ungrateful crew; with how invincible a meekness and patience he *endured the contradiction of sinners*; the scornful reproaches, the wrongful calumnies, the spiteful and cruel usages of the envious and malicious world; being to the highest extremity despised, hated, maligned, and abused by those whom he had most highly honored, most affectionately loved, and conferred the greatest favors upon. We may with astonishment contemplate that strange contest between divine patience and human wickedness, striving which of them should excel; when we do peruse and weigh those

enigmatical passages, God accused by man of blasphemy, the eternal wisdom aspersed with folly, truth itself impleaded of imposture, essential love made guilty of mischief, and supreme goodness styled a malefactor; infinite power beat down, and trampled upon by impotent malice; the judge of all the world, the fountain of all authority and right, arraigned, condemned, and executed for injustice; the *desire of all nations* rejected by his own country and kindred; the joy of paradise (whose light-some countenance doth cheer heaven itself) almost overwhelmed with grief, uttering lamentable groans, tortured with grievous agonies; the very heart of God bleeding, and the sole Author of life expiring.

We may farther study Jesus with compassion and tears, pitying not these his own sufferings, but for the vengeance for them due and decreed unto his persecutors; we should mark him excusing their fault, and praying for their pardon; dying willingly for their good, when he died violently by their hand; passionately desiring their salvation, when they maliciously procured his destruction.

We should mind all the actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the most wise grounds, endearing circumstances, and precious fruits of them; his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession; as containing instances of the greatest charity and humility possible showed unto us, as arguments of the greatest love and gratitude due from us. Mind them we should most seriously, so as to be heartily affected with them, so as to esteem worthily the transcendent honor done us by God assuming our nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the divine nature; so as to be deeply sensible of our obligation to so immense a charity, that could do and suffer so much for us, without any desert of ours, yea notwithstanding our exceedingly bad deserts, our rebellions and enmities against him; so as to detest the heinousness of our sins, that needed so mighty an expiation, that caused so horrid a tragedy; so as not to neglect so great salvation so frankly offered, so dearly purchased for us; not to frustrate the designs of so unconceivable love and goodness, so as to obey readily so gracious a master, to follow carefully so admirable an example; so as in imitation of him, and for his sake, to be meek, and humble in heart, and in deed, seeing he did so infinitely condescend and abase himself for

us; to be patient and submissive to his will, who stooped so low, and suffered so much for us; so as to bear a general affection to mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular interests, nor limited by any partial respects, but extended freely, in real desire and intention, toward all; liberally to impart the good things we possess, and patiently to brook the crosses we meet with, and heartily to forgive the offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greatest glories of eternity, with the highest dignities, and the richest treasures of heaven for our sake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in trespasses and sins*, guilty of numberless grievous offences against him, by his blood redeeming us from wrath, reconciling us to the mercy and favor of God.

3. We should also meditate upon the blessed Spirit of God, with equal goodness conspiring, and co-operating with all the purposes, to all the effects of grace, which conduce to our everlasting happiness; more especially as the repairer of our decayed frames, the enlivener of our dead souls, the infuser of spiritual light into our dark minds, the kindler of spiritual warmth in our cold hearts; the raiser of spiritual appetite to righteousness, and the relish of goodness in our stupid senses; the imparters of spiritual strength and vigor to our feeble powers; the author of all liberty, loosing us from captivity under the tyranny of Satan, from vassalage unto our own carnal lusts and passions; from subjection to a hard and imperious law, from bondage to the terrors of a guilty conscience:—as him, that enableth us to perform the duties, and accomplish the conditions required of us in order to our salvation, that qualifyeth us to be the sons of God by his effectual grace, and assureth us that we are so by his comfortable testimony; as our sure guide in the ways of truth and virtue; our faithful counsellor in all doubts and darknesses; our mighty support and succour in all needs, in all distresses; our ready guard against all assaults and temptations; our sweet comforter in all sadnesses and afflictions: who doth insinuate good thoughts, doth kindle holy desires, doth cherish pious resolutions, doth further honest endeavours in us: who only doth inflame our hearts with devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth enable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of request, and becometh

advocate for the good success of our prayers.

We should mind him as the root of all good fruits growing in us, or sprouting from us; the producer of all good habits formed in us, the assister of all good works performed by us; the spring of all true content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the faith, our continuing in hope, our working in charity, the purification of our hearts, the mortification of our lusts, the sanctification of our lives, the salvation of our souls are principally due, are most justly ascribed:—as the author and preserver of so inestimable benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us consider him as condescending to be a loving friend and constant guest to so mean and unworthy creatures; vouchsafing to attend over us, to converse with us, to dwell in us, rendering our souls holy temples of his divinity, royal thrones of his majesty, bright orbs of his heavenly light, pleasant paradises of his blissful presence; our souls, which naturally are profane receptacles of wicked and impure affections, dark cells of false and fond imaginations, close prisons of black and sad thoughts:—as graciously striving with us, striving to open and enter into our hearts, barred against him by vain conceits, and vicious inclinations; striving to reclaim us from the sins and errors into which we are wont heedlessly or wilfully to precipitate ourselves; striving to make us, what in all duty and wisdom we should be, capable of divine favor, and fit for everlasting happiness:—as enduring patiently manifold displeasures and disrespects from us; our rude oppositions against him, our frequent neglects of his kind admonitions; our many perverse humors, wanton freaks, wilful miscarriages, and unworthy dealings toward him.

We should thus mind the blessed Spirit of God, and be suitably affected toward him; so as to be duly sensible of and thankful for those inexpressible gifts and blessings indulged to us by him, so as to render all love and reverence, all praise and glory, all obedience and service to him, especially so as to admit him cheerfully into our hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earnest prayers; to make fit preparations for his reception and entertainment (by cleansing our hearts from all loathsome impurities) to make him welcome, and treat him kindly, with all civil respect, with all humble observance; not

grieving and vexing him by our distasteful crossness and peevishness, not tempting him by our fond presumption, or base treachery; not extinguishing his heavenly light and holy fire by our foul lusts, our damp stupidities, our cold neglects, our neglects to foment and nourish them by the food of devout meditations and zealous desires:—so let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle illapses, to delight in his most pleasant society, to hearken to his faithful suggestions, to comply with all his kindly motions, to behave ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him.

Thus should we employ our mind, all the faculties of our soul, our understanding, our will, our affections upon the blessed Trinity, the supreme of all things above, the founder of that celestial society, into which as Christians we are inserted; the sovereign of that heavenly kingdom to which we are subjects; the fountain of all the good and happiness we can hope for in that superior state. To the performance of which duty there be arguments and inducements innumerable; it is the most proper and connatural object of our mind, that for which it is fittest, and for which it was designed; the best intelligible, and infinitely most amiable of all things. It is the most worthy and noble object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will most elevate, most enrich, most adorn, most enlarge the capacities, and most satisfy the appetites of our souls. It is the most sweet and pleasant object, wherein all light, all beauty, all perfection do shine; the sight and love of which do constitute paradise, and beatify heaven itself. It is the most useful and beneficial object of our mind, which will best instruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will most incite us to those duties which we are obliged to perform, will be most efficacious to the begetting in us those dispositions which are indispensably requisite for the attainment, and for the enjoyment of that everlasting bliss; unto which that one blessed Unity, and glorious Trinity in its infinite mercy bring us all: To whom be all glory, honor, and praise for ever. Amen.

DR. BARROW.

The equal obligation of Believers to Three Persons in Jehovah.

THAT God the Father should design such a Redemption for us; *not sparing his*

own Son, but delivering him up for us, to be thus dealt with for our sake: that God would endure to see his Son in so pitiful a condition, to hear him groaning under so grievous pressures, to let him be so horribly abused; and that for us, who deserved nothing from him, who had deserved so much against him; for us, who were no friends to him, (*for even when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, Rom. v. 10;) who were not any ways commendable for goodness or righteousness: (*for Christ did suffer for sinners, the just for the unjust*; and *God commended his love to us, that while we were sinful, Christ died for us*;) that God thus should love us, sending his Son to be a propitiation for our sins, in so dismal a way of suffering, how stupendous is that goodness! how vast an obligation doth it lay upon us to reciprocal affection! If we do owe all to God, as our Maker, from whose undeserved bounty we did receive all that we have; how much farther do we stand indebted to him as the Author of our Redemption, from whose ill-deserved mercy we receive a new being, and a better state; and that in a way far more obliging? For God created us with a word, without more cost or trouble: but to redeem us, stood him in huge expenses and pains; no less than the debasing his only Son to our frailty, the exposing him to more than our misery, the withdrawing his face, and restraining his bowels from his best beloved. If a Jew then were commanded by law, if a Gentile were obliged by nature, to love God with all his heart and all his soul; what affection doth a Christian, under the law and duty of grace, owe unto him? By what computation can we reckon that debt? What faculties have we sufficient to discharge it? What finite heart can hold an affection commensurate to such an obligation?

And how can it otherwise than inflame our heart with love toward the blessed Son of God, our Saviour, to consider that merely out of charitable pity toward us, he purposely came down from heaven, and took our flesh upon him, that he might therein undergo those extreme acerbities of pain, and those most ugly indignities of shame for us? *Greater love* (said he) *hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*: but that God should lay down his life, should pour

forth his blood, should be aspersed with the worst crimes, and clothed with foulest shame, should be executed on a cross as a malefactor and a slave, for his enemies and rebellious traitors, what imagination can devise any expression of charity or friendship comparable to this! Wherefore if love naturally be productive of love, if friendship justly meriteth a correspondence in good-will, what effect should the consideration of so ineffable a love, of so unparalleled friendship, have upon us?

How can any serious reflection on this event fail to work hearty gratitude in us toward our good Lord? For, put case, any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, (and that a very large one,) of his honor, (and that a very high one,) of his ease and pleasure, (and those the most perfect and assured that could be); that he should expose himself to the greatest hazards, should endure the sorest pains, and most disgraceful ignominies; should prostitute his life, and in most hideous manner lose it, merely for our sake:—should we not then apprehend and confess ourselves monstrously ungrateful, if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment and all the requital we were able? The case in regard to our blessed Saviour is like in kind; but in degree, whatever we can suppose doth infinitely fall below the performances of him for us, who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the majesty and the felicity of God for the infamies and the dolours of a cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and instate us in the joys of Paradise. So that our obligations of gratitude to him are inexpressibly great; and we cannot with any face deny ourselves to be most basely unworthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable. Nor should we forget, that also upon this account we do owe great love and thanks to God the Holy Ghost, who, as he did originally conspire in the wonderful project of our redemption, as he did executively by miraculous operation conduct our Saviour into his fleshly tabernacle, as he did by unmeasurable communications of divine virtue assist his humanity through

all the course of his life; so in this juncture he did inspire him with charity more than human, and did support him to undergo those pressures with invincible patience; and so did sanctify all this sacerdotal performance, that our Lord, as the apostle doth affirm, *did through the eternal Spirit offer himself without spot to God.*
DR. BARROW.

It is an error to suppose that we are indebted to one more than another of the divine Persons: for their love is but one and the same love, as their essence or nature is one and the same; and there could not exist such a difference or inequality of kindness to men, unless there was such a difference or inequality in themselves as would not stand with the perfect unity of the Godhead.

The love of the three Persons formed the covenant of grace from everlasting, in which they were equally and undividedly concerned; and though the fulfilment of this covenant had necessarily an order and distinction, according to the several engagements of the three distinct Persons, yet the mind and will of the Godhead were but one, and the object of their power but one, even Jehovah's glory in the salvation of sinners.

The Father loved, and concurred in the redemption of his chosen by Christ; the Son loved, and bare their sins in their nature, glorifying in that nature all the attributes of the Godhead; the Spirit loved, and engaged to make effectual the whole plan, by fitting the heart to receive, and by carrying to the heart the benefits of eternal salvation. Thus God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself; Christ fulfilled all that was given to him to do; the Spirit enlivens, enlightens, and seals to the day of redemption. This is the order of the covenant; beginning with the Father, and, through the Son and Spirit, descending from heaven to the salvation of his people; but, in the order of their enjoyment of this covenant, the Spirit begins with them, and they ascend by him, next to the Son, and then to the Father. This is a blessed mystery of faith, which (however plain in the Scriptures) can only be understood truly in the course of a gracious experience. No mere notions, and especially of the carnal mind, can possibly reach it. The tuition, or rather intuition, is altogether divine.

What a blessed thing it is to believe and to know assuredly, that the wisdom, will, affection, and power, of all the persons in Jehovah are concerned in the salvation of every poor sinner that repenteth! What a confidence of spirit ought not this to inspire in the children of God! If the Lord be thus engaged and concerned in their welfare, how can any of them be lost, or fail of what he hath prepared for them? O my soul, rejoice in the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit, that one God, who hath done such great things for thee, and who will yet do more, yea, more than eye hath seen, ear heard, or entered into the heart of man to conceive. To this One God be Glory. Amen. Hallelujah.

AMB. SERLE.

Consolation of the Doctrine of Three Persons in Jehovah.

THIS fundamental of our religion may be a ground of great encouragement to discouraged souls. It is ordinary, that the apprehensions of Christians take up Jesus Christ as very lovely, and more loving than any of the persons of the Godhead, either the Father or the Holy Ghost. There are some thoughts of estrangement and distance of the Father, as if the Son did really reconcile and gain him to love us who before hated us; and upon this mistake the soul is filled with continual jealousies and suspicions of the love of God. But observe, I beseech you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all of them first agreeing in one testimony. The Father declares from heaven, that he is abundantly well pleased with his Son, not only because he is his Son, but even in the undertaking and performing of that work of Redemption of sinners. It is therefore his most serious invitation, and peremptory command to all, to hear him, and believe in him, Matt. iii. 17. 1 John iii. 23. Nay, if we speak more properly, our salvation is not the business of Christ alone, as we imagine it, but the whole Godhead is interested in it deeply, and so deeply, that you cannot say, who loves it most, or likes it most. The Father is the very Fountain of it, his love is the spring of all. *God so loved the world, that he hath sent his Son.* Christ hath not purchased that eternal love to us, but is rather the gift, the free gift of eternal love. And therefore, as we have the Son de-

lighting among the sons of men, Prov. viii. and delighting to be employed and to do his will, Psal. xl.; so we have the Father, delighting to send his son, and taking pleasure in instructing him, and furnishing him for it, Isa. xlii. 1. And therefore Christ often professed that he was not about his own work, but the Father's work who sent him, and that it was not his own will, but his Father's he was fulfilling. Therefore we should not look upon the head-spring of our salvation in the Son, but rather ascend up to the Father, whose love and wisdom did frame all this. And thus we may be confident to come to the Father in the Son, knowing that it was the love of the Father that sent the Son, though indeed we must come to him only in the Son in the name of Christ, and faith of acceptance through a Mediator, not because the Mediator purchaseth his good will but because his love and good-will only vents in his beloved Son Christ, and therefore he will not be known nor worshipped but in him, in whom he is near sinners, and reconciling the world to himself. And then the Holy Ghost concurs in this testimony; and as the Son had the work of purchasing rights and interests to grace and glory, so the great work of applying all these privileges to saints, and making them actually partakers of the blessings of Christ his death, is committed in a special way to the Holy Ghost, *I will send the Comforter*, &c. So then Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all agree in one, that Jesus Christ is a sure refuge for sinners, a plank for shipwrecked men, a firm and sure foundation to build everlasting hopes upon. There is no party dissenting in all the Gospel. The business of the salvation of lost souls is concluded in this holy council of the Trinity with one voice. As at first all of them agreed to make man, *Let us make man*: so again, they agree to make him again, to restore him to life in the second Adam. Whoever thou be that wouldst flee to God for mercy, do it in confidence. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are ready to welcome thee, all of one mind to shut out none, to cast out none. But to speak properly, it is but one love; one will, one council, and purpose in the Father, Son, and Spirit, for these Three are One, and not only agree in one, they are one, and what one loves or purposes, all love and purpose.

PROF. BINNING.

Each Person in the Trinity the Object of our Prayers.

If we consider the persons of the glorious Trinity, so they are all adorable with this act of divine worship. None will deny but that we may direct our prayers unto God the Father; and that God the Son may be distinctly prayed unto, we have an uncontrollable instance in that of St. Stephen: *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*, Acts vii. 59. Yea, and this adoration is due not only to the Divine nature of Christ, which was from all eternity the same in being, in majesty and glory, with the Father; but it is also due unto Christ as Mediator, as God-Man, and so his human nature is also joined in the participation of this high honor, through its union to the Divine nature: the very angels in heaven are commanded to adore him as God-Man, as Mediator, *When he bringeth in his first begotten into the world*, Heb. i. 6. that is, when he brought him into the world as man, he saith, *and let all the angels of God worship him*. Indeed we no where in Scripture, as I remember, have express mention made of any prayer directed to the Holy Ghost; yet whosoever allows him to be God, cannot deny him this worship of prayer: if we must believe in him, we may then certainly call upon him, as the apostle argues, Rom. x. 14.; yea, we have an instance of the seraphims giving praise unto him, which is one part of prayer, *They cried to one another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts*, Isa. vi. 3. This God is the same who in verses 10, 11. bids the prophet say to the people, *Hear ye indeed but understand not, make the heart of this people fat, make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they hear with their ears and see with their eyes*. This is that God whom the seraphims adored, and this is that God that spake to the prophet; and the apostle quoting this very place out of Isaiah, tells us, Acts xxviii. 25. that it was the Holy Ghost spake; so that by comparing these two places together, you see plainly that the Holy Ghost is God, and that he is to be adored by us with the same worship that we worship the Father, and the Son, for the Holy Ghost is the *Lord God of Hosts*; which St. Paul refers to the Holy Ghost: *Well spake the Holy Ghost concerning them*. Thus if we consider God Personally, each person in the Trinity may well be the object of our prayers.

Consider God *essentially*, and so we are also to direct our prayers to him. Now to consider God *essentially*, is to have the eye of our faith fixed upon his attributes, not upon his person; to consider him when we pray to him, not as Father, Son or Holy Ghost, but only as an infinitely glorious, wise, powerful, gracious God, and the like; to look upon him as a most pure essence whose presence is every where, whose presence and goodness is over all things; to conceive him to be an infinite Being altogether un-conceivable, this is to consider God *essentially*. Now this notion of God is equally common to all the three Persons, and therefore this is the most fit and congruous way when we come to God in prayer to represent before us his attributes. We need not select out any one Person in the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, to direct our prayers unto, unless it be in some cases wherein their particular offices are more immediately concerned; but when we pray to him who is Almighty, who is All-wise, infinitely Holy, infinitely Just and Merciful, we pray at once to the whole Trinity, both to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So when we pray according to that holy form that Christ hath taught us, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, Father there denotes not only God the Father, the first Person in the Trinity, but it is a relative attribute belonging equally to all the Persons in the Trinity. God is the Father of all men by creation and providence, and he is especially the Father of the faithful by regeneration and adoption. Why now as these actions of creation, regeneration, and adoption are common to the whole Trinity, so also is the title of Father common to the whole Trinity: God the first Person is indeed eminently called the Father; but that is not in respect of us, but in respect of Christ his only-begotten Son from all eternity; in respect of us the whole Trinity is *our Father which art in Heaven*; and when we pray so, we pray both to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—to all the three Persons.

BR. HOPKINS.

The Son and the Holy Spirit both Advocates.

THERE are two sorts of advocates; the one plead before the judges, and endeavor to convince them by the strength of their

arguments; the other are consulting advocates, who instruct their clients, advise them, resolve their doubts, inform them in difficult points, and conduct their affairs. Jesus is properly a Comforter, an Advocate of the first order. He is our pleading Advocate before the Sovereign Judge, who, bringing forward the invincible arguments of his Passion, pleads with the powerful voice of his blood, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, and obtains for us absolution and grace. But the Holy Ghost is our chamber-counsellor, who advises, instructs, and comforts us, gives us courage to address ourselves unto God, confidence and boldness to speak to him, and the necessary dispositions to prevail with him to hear us. Oh, how happy are we, in having two such Advocates! one of whom pleads for us in heaven, and the other teaches us to form our requests on earth.

Du Bosc.

The intercession of the Spirit is not to be understood of his acting the part of a Mediator between God and man on our account, before the throne of the Majesty on high, but of his relieving our infirmities, as the Illuminator and Comforter of the faithful, in our religious addresses and duties. Christ is the only Mediator and Advocate with the Father; the Spirit is our Sanctifier and the assister of our weaknesses here. The office of Christ is im-

mediately before the throne of God, the agency of the Spirit is more directly with the Church. The intercession of Christ is without us, that of the Holy Ghost is within us. The intercession of Christ is meritorious, the intercession of the Spirit is gracious and supporting. Christ intercedes, and the Spirit is given; the Holy Ghost intercedes, and we implore the benefits of the Saviour's death. By the intercession of Christ all the obstacles to our salvation are removed, as they respect our offended God; by the intercession of the Spirit all the difficulties are taken away which arise from our own frail and corrupt hearts. Christ pleads above, the Spirit pleads below. By the one we are taught to pray, by the other our prayers are accepted. Accordingly the Holy Ghost was of old promised as a *Spirit of grace and of supplications*: and *because we are sons*, God is said to have *sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying*, (or as it is in Rom. viii. *whereby we cry*), *Abba, Father*, Gal. iv. 6. This last expression will precisely explain the term Intercession before us: for, as by the blessed Spirit crying in our hearts, *Abba, Father*, is obviously meant his enabling us so to cry; in like manner his making intercession for us, is designed to describe his enabling us to intercede and pray for ourselves.

REV. D. WILSON.

SECTION VI.—ON MAN.

Contrast between the Original and Fallen State of Man.

1. *How illustrious a being was man, as he came from the hands of his Maker.*

With what dignified attributes was he endued! For what high pursuits was he qualified! To what sublime enjoyments was he destined! In him was found, in an important sense, the *end* of this earthly system. Without man, the world, its furniture, and its inhabitants, would have existed in vain. Whatever skill, power, and goodness were displayed by the creating hand; there was, before the formation of man, none to understand, admire, love, enjoy, or praise the Creator. The earth was clothed with beauty, the landscape unfolded its delightful scenes, the sky spread its magnificent curtains, the sun

travelled in the greatness of his strength, the moon and stars solemnly displayed the glorious wisdom of their Author, without an eye to gaze, or an heart to contemplate. A magnificent habitation was indeed built and furnished, but no tenant was found. Brutes were the only beings which could enjoy at all, and their enjoyment was limited to animal gratification.

But man was separated from all earthly creatures, by being formed an intelligent being. His mind could trace the skill and glory of the Creator in the works of his hands; and from the nature of the work, could understand, admire and adore the Workman. His thoughts could rise to God, and wander through eternity. The universe was to him a mirror, by which he saw reflected every moment, in every place, and in every form, the beauty,

greatness, and excellence of Jehovah. To Him, his affections and his praises rose, more sweet than the incense of the morning; and made no unhappy harmony with the loftier music of heaven. He was the priest of this great world; and offered the morning and evening sacrifice of thanksgiving for the whole earthly creation. Of this creation he was also the lord; not the tyrant, but the rightful, just, benevolent sovereign. The subjection of the inferior creatures to him was voluntary; and productive of nothing but order, peace, and happiness. With these endowments and privileges, he was placed in paradise, no unhappy resemblance of heaven itself; and surrounded by every thing which was 'good for food, or pleasant to the eye,' or fragrant to the smell. In an atmosphere, impregnated with life; amid streams, in which life flowed; amid fruits, in which life bloomed and ripened; encircled by ever-living beauty and magnificence, peaceful within, safe without, and conscious of immortality; he was destined to labour, only that he might be useful and happy, and to contemplate the wonders of the universe, and worship its glorious Author, as his prime and professional employment. He was an image of the invisible God; created to be like him in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, his most illustrious attributes; and, like him, to exercise dominion over the works of his hands. In this situation also, removed far from death and disease, from sorrow and fear, he was formed for endless improvement. His mind, like that of angels, was capable of continual expansion, refinement and elevation; and his life, of perpetual exaltation in worth, usefulness and honor. God was his visitor, angels were his companions. To complete this system of delight, he was created to be the parent of countless millions, who, like himself, were all to be sinless. They were also to inhabit the same world of peace, life, and happiness; to possess the same immortality, and to share in the same endless enjoyment. At the head of this lower creation, he was to stand and survey this great globe, filled with his own offspring; and to see the whole immense family, like himself, children of God, and heirs of his everlasting love.

2. *How greatly has man fallen from his original state.*

What proofs of humiliation are visi-

ble in every thing, found in the present world.

In our bodies, particularly, what seeds of weakness, distress, and decay. The first proofs that we possess life are the cries of pain and suffering, inarticulately uttered by the infant, just entered into the world. How often does even that infant agonise and expire in the cradle. If he passes into childhood, how many pains does he undergo; how many fears, how many sorrows. How frequently is he carried, while a child, to the grave. Should he arrive at youth, what a train of new evils is he obliged to encounter. And in how many instances does the canker-worm or the frost nip the blossom, and wither it beneath the fond eye of parental love. Should he become a man, sickness, pain, and sorrow still hunt him through every course of life, and not unfrequently infix their fangs in his heart-strings; while death, always watching for his prey, descends when he is least aware, and seizes, and bears away the miserable victim. Should he live to old age, his strength declines, his face is furrowed with wrinkles, and his head whitened with hoary locks. His body bends towards the earth, from which it was taken; and exhausted by suffering, he resigns his breath; and is conveyed to the dark and narrow house, devoured by worms, dissolved by corruption, and changed into his original dust.

His mind, in the mean time, the sport of evil, ungovernable passions, is ignorant, wild, wayward; the seat of a thousand errors, weaknesses, and follies. With its follies, its sins keep at least an equal pace. Selfishness in many forms, all of them odious, distresses the parental eye even in infancy. In childhood, in youth, in manhood, it is seen in new varieties of operation, and new appearances of deformity. Pride and ambition, avarice and sensuality, pollute and debase the man in early stages of life; and all increase their savage, brutal controul, as he advances in his progress. At the same time envy, fraud, deceit, violence, and cruelty, mould him into a monster; and scarcely permit us to believe, that he was once formed in the image of God. Where is now the mild, benevolent, equitable dominion, exercised by our great Progenitor over his happy empire? Where the peace between man and the inferior

inhabitants of the earth? The chief traces of his footsteps through the animal world are oppression, blood, and death.

In the moral world, what scenes of pollution, fraud and tyranny, of war and ravage, are every where displayed. What groans of anguish have been heard from one end of heaven to the other, and from the apostasy to the present hour.

In the natural world, what a host of enemies to man are arrayed by famine and disease, the storm, the earthquake, and the volcano. Even his breath, his food, his pleasure, are all means of his destruction.

Where is his purity, justice, truth, and good-will? Where his piety, his morning praise, his evening incense? Where his converse with God, his familiarity with angels? Men are now the family of Adam; but how different a family from that which has been described. Were the great ancestor of mankind to rise from the dead, and cast his eyes over this earth; what a race of children would he behold. Accompany him in your imagination to the retreats of drunkenness, gluttony, and pollution. Could he believe that the wretches, burrowed in these foul recesses, sprang from him, who once offered up the worship of paradise? Enter with him into a hall of justice, and see him ponder in silent amazement the terrible exhibitions of fraud and falsehood, private injustice and personal cruelty. Behold him mark with a failing eye the lowering gloom of the gibbet, the horrid recesses of the gaol, and the felon crimes which they were destined to reward. Follow him to the throne of tyranny, and see his bosom heave with emotions unutterable, while he watches the devastation of human happiness and human hope, accomplished by the iron hand of power; man, blasted and withered by its touch, and the fiend himself rioting on sorrow, tears, and death. Finally, adventure with him to the field of battle; and see him tremble and faint at the shouts and groans, at the sight of immeasurable fury, carnage, and woe. How would his heart rend asunder with agony; how would his eyes weep blood, at such a view of this miserable world. At the remembrance, that both the authors and the subjects of these sufferings were his own offspring. Where would he now find his Eden, his virtue, his immortality?

DR. DWIGHT.

● *God made Man upright.*

God made man upright.—When the progenitors of our race came from the forming hand of their Creator, they were the subjects of perfect intellectual and moral rectitude. There was no distortion in the understanding, no obliquity in the will, no corruption in the affections. There was perfect truth in the mind, perfect purity in the heart, and perfect practical holiness in the life. They were made *in the image, and after the likeness* of God himself; which, according to the apostle, consisted especially in *righteousness and true holiness*, connected with, and arising out of, *knowledge*.—Otherwise than thus, man could not be made by a pure, and holy, and benevolent Being. To suppose the contrary, is to make God, in the strictest sense, in a sense of which it is impious to admit the imagination, the Author of sin. The subject, indeed, is enveloped in difficulties, of which that man has not properly thought who does not feel their magnitude. Into the discussion of these, it were unseasonable to enter. I can only remark in general, that the matter of fact, of the actual existence of moral evil, is too notorious to admit of a moment's question:—that the Bible account of its origin did not cause it; it existed independently of the revelation which informs us how it began; and the rejection of that revelation neither removes nor mitigates it, nor disencumbers it, in the slightest degree, of its embarrassing difficulties:—that, on the contrary, revelation alone, whilst it assumes and proceeds upon the mournful fact, provides a remedy: all other systems, finding human nature in ruins, leave it as they find it; Revelation rears out of the ruins a magnificent and holy Temple to the God of purity and love. That evil exists, then, is an indisputable fact:—that God could not be its Author, is a proposition, which, to all who entertain right notions of his character, will be equally indisputable:—*God made man upright.* Of all that followed, although happening *according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge*, the guilt and responsibility must necessarily lie with man himself. This is the statement here; and it is a statement to the truth of which we must assent, in despite of any puzzling questions to which the subject has given rise:—*God made man upright, but they—that*

is, men *-have sought out many inventions.* DR. WARDLAW.

Wherein the Image of God, in which Man was created, consisted.

BUT we come again to man; of whom it hath been said, that he was created in the image of God. Moses doth not explain, in what that image and likeness of God consisted. But would we clearly discover, what man was possessed of before the Fall, and unto what, by the grace of Jesus Christ, he is to be restored; we must turn our eyes to Jesus Christ; not properly in that character of the Lamb of God, who made himself an offering to God for us, but only in that point of view, as he was a Man. As a man he was in the closest communion with his Father; and the Holy Ghost dwelt in him. The law of God was in his heart; that is, he was full of the love of God and of men. He was filled with wisdom, and was in favor with God and men; that is, he was well-pleasing to God, and esteemed by men. He gladly did the will of his Father, and it was his meat; that is, he lived in it, and hungered to do the will of his Father. He had no self-complacency, nor did he seek his own glory; for he was lowly in heart. He was also meek of heart; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to the Father. Nevertheless he was zealous for his Father's honor, and was provoked to wrath by men, because of the hardness of their hearts. Otherwise he was compassionate; he was deeply affected when he saw the misery of poor men. Whoever stood in need of his assistance, him he gladly assisted, without examining whether he was worthy of it or not. Amidst the temptations of Satan, he stood firm and unshaken; keeping to the word and commandments of God. He looked to his Father for every thing, and often spent whole nights in prayer. He sought not after good days, nor did he seek the pleasures of this world. He was always and entirely satisfied with the circumstances wherein he found himself, according to the will of his Father. He bore the greatest trials with patience, and with perfect resignation to the will of his Father. His conversation was holy; and he was able boldly to stand before his enemies, and to say, Which of you can convince me of sin, or with justice accuse me?

He confessed the truth, even in such circumstances when he knew it would cost him his life. Having no sin, he would not have died, had he not given himself up to death for us.

What hath been here said concerning the man Jesus Christ is not conjecture, but every circumstance of it is clear and plain from the Holy Scripture. Now, as Christ is expressly called the *Image of God*, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. it is from thence evident, that this was the condition of Adam before the fall, when he was like unto God, and bore his image; and that thus we shall also be, as soon as we are reinstated into the Image of God.

No sooner doth a poor man, by faith in Christ, become a child of God and a new creature, but the image of God begins to take place in him. And, if he grows in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, that is applicable to him which Paul describes.

We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

If we add the words of Paul;

Put on the New Man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him that created him, Col. iii. 10.

Also the words,

Put on that New Man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24.

Then may we comprise what hath been said in a few words, and confidently assert, That the Image of God, or likeness to God, consists in the knowledge of the truth, and in righteousness and true holiness.

MORAVIAN CONFESSION.

The Greatness and Meanness of Man.

MAN is at a loss where to fix himself. He is unquestionably out of his way, and feels within himself the remains of a happy state which he cannot retrieve. He searches in every direction, with solicitude, but without success, encompassed with impenetrable darkness!

Hence arose the contest amongst the philosophers: some of whom endeavored to exalt man, by displaying his greatness; others to abase him, by representing his misery. And what seems more strange, is, that each party borrowed the arguments of the other, to establish their own opi-

nion. For the misery of man may be inferred from his greatness, and his greatness from his misery. Thus the one sect demonstrated his misery the more satisfactorily, in that they inferred it from his greatness; and the other the more clearly proved his greatness, because they deduced it from his misery. Whatever was offered by the one, to establish his greatness, served only to evince his misery, as alleged by the other; it being more miserable to have fallen from the greater height. And the converse is equally true. So that in this endless circle of dispute, each helped to advance his adversary's cause; for it is certain that the more men are enlightened, the more they will discover of human misery and human greatness. In a word, man knows himself to be miserable. He is, therefore miserable, because he knows himself to be so. But he is also eminently great, because he knows himself to be miserable.

What a chimera then is man! What a novelty! What a chaos! What a subject of contradiction! A judge of all things, and yet a worm of the earth; the depository of the truth, and yet a medley of uncertainties; the glory and the scandal of the universe. If he exalt himself, I humble him; if he humble himself, I exalt him; and press him with his own inconsistencies, till he comprehends himself to be an incomprehensible monster. PASCAL.

Now all the apparent contradictions are accounted for. For what is so great as man; and yet what so little—what so great, if you mark the occasional traces of his original grandeur—what so little if you follow the prevalent course of his desires and conduct!

What so great as man! How exalted the dignity of his nature above the inferior animals! What a gift is reason! What a distinction, speech! What a thirst he has for knowledge—what a desire after happiness—what a mind, in some faint measure, representing the Deity! Whither cannot his powers extend themselves! What discoveries of science, what invention in the arts! What a thirst after something which is not found beneath the sun, after a good which has no limit! What enlargement, what constant improvement the soul is capable of! In spite of all his misery, he has a feeling, a sentiment which elevates him, and which

he cannot repress. Nothing satisfies his ambition but the esteem of rational and intellectual beings. He burns with the love of glory; he has an idea of a lost happiness which he seeks in every thing in vain. He is a dethroned monarch, wandering through a strange country, but who cannot lay aside his original habits of thought and expectation.*

And yet what so little as man! what contradictions is this strange creature daily and hourly exhibiting! As to his ends and capacities, he is great; as to his habits, he is abject and vile. His reason is expansive, comprehensive, elevated; and yet his passions mean and uncertain and perverse. His mind vast and noble; his desires impure and corrupted; his dissatisfaction with external things separating him from the earth, and yet his propensities chaining him down to it. His thoughts full of grandeur, but his affections narrow and grovelling. In his aspirations, he rises up to angels; in his vices, he sinks below the brutes. In his conceptions of futurity, immensity, eternity, he is sublime; in his follies, pursuits, and desires, he is limited, degraded, childish. Thus, man is a maze and labyrinth to himself, full of grandeur, and full of meanness—of grandeur as to his original dignity, as to the image of God, his capacity for religion, his longing for immortality, his thirst of truth, his large designs and projects—and yet low and debased as to his passions, his changeableness, his pursuit of any folly or error, his degrading pleasures and appetites, his delight in sensual things, and neglect of his intellectual and moral nature.

Hence the history of mankind has ever presented the appalling picture of misery, folly, vice, ignorance triumphant, (except as Revelation has supplied a remedy,) notwithstanding all man's powers and desires. He will not part with religion, and yet lives a slave to appetite; he will not forsake the pursuit of truth, and yet he loves a lie. And whilst apparently advancing towards perfection, he seems also to be sinking into lower depths of debasement.

REV. D. WILSON.

Traces of the Divine Image still observable in Man.

THAT God hath withdrawn himself, and left this his temple desolate, we have

many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription — ‘Here God once dwelt.’ Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to show the divine presence did sometime reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity, to proclaim he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct, the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished, which did the one shine with so heavenly brightness, the other burn with so pious fervor; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown away as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the prince of darkness; the sacred incense, which sent rolling up in clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous, hellish vapor, and here is, *instead of a sweet savour, a stench*. The comely order of this house is turned all into confusion; *the beauties of holiness* into noisome impurities; *the house of prayer* into *a den of thieves*, and that of the worst and most horrid kind; for every lust is a thief, and every theft sacrilege: continual rapine and robbery are committed upon holy things. The noble powers which were designed and dedicated to divine contemplation and delight, are alienated to the service of the most despicable idols, and employed unto vilest intuitions and embraces; to behold and admire lying vanities, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness. What! have not the enemies done wickedly in the sanctuary? How have they broken down the carved work thereof, and that too with axes and hammers. Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that great king; the relics of common notions; the lively prints of some undefaced truth; the fair ideas of things; the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold! with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God, and how they now lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in heaps of dirt and rubbish! There is not now a system, an entire table of coherent truths to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered parcels. And if any, with great toil and labour, apply themselves to draw out here one piece, and there another, and set them together,

they serve rather to show how exquisite the divine workmanship was in the original composition, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was first designed. Some pieces agree, and own one another; but how soon are our inquiries and endeavours non-plussed and superseded! How many attempts have been made, since that fearful fall and ruin of this fabric, to compose again the truths of so many several kinds into their distinct orders, and make up frames of science, or useful knowledge; and after so many ages, nothing is finished in any one kind! Sometimes truths are misplaced, and what belongs to one kind, is transferred to another, where it will not fitly match: sometimes falsehood inserted, which shatters or disturbs the whole frame. And what is with much fruitless pains done by one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of greatest use, though not most out of sight, are least regarded: their tendency and design are overlooked; or they are so loosened and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the soul, but hover as faint ineffectual notions, that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one another confounded and broken: so that what is judged considerable is not considered, what is recommended as eligible and lovely is not loved and chosen. Yea, the truth which is after godliness is not so much disbelieved, as hated, held in unrighteousness; and shines as too feeble a light in that malignant darkness which comprehends it not. You come, amidst all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some great prince, in which you see here the fragments of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some curious imagery, and all lying neglected and useless among heaps of dirt. He that invites you to take a view of the soul of man, gives you but such another prospect, and doth but say to you, — ‘Behold the desolation;’ all things rude and waste. So that should there be any pretence to the divine presence, it might be said, If God be here, why is it thus? The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, the impurity, the decayed state in all respects of this temple,

too plainly show the great inhabitant is gone.
REV. JOHN HOWE.

This image—this beautiful image has been long since shivered and disfigured; but its fragments remain to testify that it once existed. There is in the hearts of men a testimony that they shall live for ever; a voice that echoes through futurity; a sense that they shall see strange things in another world; thoughts that wander through eternity, and find no resting place. This is a fragment of God's image, a shattered remnant of his immortality, and it is there to testify against us; for if it had been perfect, nothing would be more delightful than to think that we should live for ever; to look forward into brighter scenes, and rejoice in the glory that should be revealed. All the gold of Arabia would not be worth one hour's excursion of the mind of man into the regions of futurity. For ever and for ever would his mind be reaching forward, and dwelling with fondness upon the thought, that never, from age to age, when time should be no more, should he cease from being. The pleasures of the spirits that walk to and fro in the light of God's countenance, and circle his throne rejoicing, would crowd his fancy and delight his hopes. Visions of celestial happiness would visit him in dreams of the night, and, compared with the dim and distant perspective of eternity, all earthly things would seem 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable.' And what is the fact? Let every man judge himself how his natural heart shrinks from the contemplation of a future state of being; how he shudders to look into eternity, as into some dreary and bottomless pit. What a cold and dismal thing does immortality appear; and what a refreshment it is to his spirits to withdraw his thoughts from the consideration, and return to his beloved earth! And then, only observe with what eagerness and desperation he gives up soul and body to the pursuit of things which he knows full well will soon be to him as if they had never been. And yet, this man, if you were to ask him the question, would tell you, that he expected to live for ever; and that when his body was mouldering in the dust from which it was taken, his soul would plunge into an ocean of spirits without bottom and without shore. This he would tell you gravely, as a matter of course.

And then only observe him for one week or for one day, or for this day, which has been sanctified to immortal purposes, and you will find his cares, his hopes, his fears, his wishes, his affections, busied and bustling about this little span of earth, and this little measure of time which he occupies: and death finds this immortal being making playthings of sand, and carries him away from them all, into a land where they shall all be forgotten. This is a strange and astonishing contradiction,—the only thing that looks like a blunder through all the works of nature. Every thing else seems to know its appointed time and its appointed place:—the sun knows his place in the heavens, he does his duty in the firmament, and brings round the seasons in their order, and the ocean knows the boundaries beyond which it must not dare to pass;—every animal knows the home that kind nature has provided—*the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider.* Among all the creatures that surround us, *we* are the only beings that look not to our native home; the only beings that seem to have broken the laws of nature; to have forgotten our owner, and the mansions of our Father's house. This naked expectation of immortality, while we see no beauty in it, that we should desire it—while we are feeding on ashes, and have lost our relish for immortal food—is one of the fragments of God's image; it shows that it once existed, and that it now is broken.

But look again, and observe all the astonishing faculties of man; his reason, his memory, his imagination. Observe only how he can, as it were, take knowledge by violence, how he can lock it up in his memory, and keep it in store for his use; with what quickness and ingenuity he can invent and contrive; with what judgment he can weigh, and deliberate, and decide; how he can extort nature's secrets, how he can penetrate into the distant works of God, and inform when the sun shall be darkened, and when the moon shall refuse to give her light. Consider all these astonishing faculties, worthy of the master-piece of God, and then look at the brutal and abominable passions that blacken and deface his soul; look at this same immortal creature, beautified with all the gifts of the Almighty,

blotting out the very understanding with which he has been glorified, by a drunkenness of which brutes are incapable; nay, sometimes 'glorying in his shame,' and boasting of having thus spoiled the good work of God! Observe him next, inflamed with lust, and plunged into profligacy and debauchery, and making the eternal soul, that has been armed with such glorious faculties, the servant and slave of his perishable body. Observe him rioting in hatred, malignity, and revenge, and admitting the dark passions of an evil spirit into the soul that the Almighty had made to be an habitation for himself.

Measure now this creature with himself; the wonderful powers of his mind, the grasp of his memory, the lightning of his invention, with the depravity of which the beast of the field is incapable; the impurity that brings his soul into bondage to his body, the malice and revenge that make him an abode of the spirit of darkness. Truly 'the wild beasts are in our ruins, and the dragons are in our pleasant places.' These are fragments of an image that was beautiful; enough to show that it once existed, and that now it is broken. And amongst these ruins there is a voice sometimes heard, like the spirit of a departed inhabitant, unwilling to leave even the ruins of the palace which he once had occupied; a voice that *reasons of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*; that sometimes catches the ear in the momentary stillness of the day, and still more in the dead of the night, before deep sleep falleth upon men; but, like the murmur of a ghost, men cannot bear to listen to it, but hurry out of its reach. And thus does conscience sometimes remind us of former days, of hours of sin, of time squandered away that can never be recovered, of an impure heart, of a worldly and carnal mind, and proves that it is a remnant of God; for it tells us *that for all these things God will bring us into judgment*.

But, alas! it does no more than reproach and condemn; for, alas! it cannot change an old heart; it cannot *create a new spirit within us*; it cannot raise our affections from the dust upon which we are treading; it cannot fill us with heavenly dispositions; it cannot make us look forward with delight to scenes of future glory. Alas! this is beyond the power of

conscience; it serves to reproach, but cannot restore;—it is but a ghost among the ruins,—but a voice among the tombs, it is a poor remnant of what once was a living image of the Almighty; enough to show that it once existed, and that now it is broken.

But again, observe him gifted with the power of speech, the power of communicating thought for thought, and circulating knowledge, and truth, and love through all his fellow-creatures. Just conceive for one moment what he would be without it; how ignorant, how dreary, how comfortless!—where would then be mutual assistance, mutual advice, the communication of knowledge, the interchange of affection? Observe man, the only created being endowed with this glorious faculty, and then consider the use that he has made of it. Listen to the curses and the blasphemy against the very Being who bestowed it, who gave it, that it might rise before the throne in hallelujahs. Then hear the falsehood, the deceit, the prevarication issuing through the channel where truth should for ever flow; then hear the impure and wanton jest, that circulates poison, and nurses and assists the natural corruption of the heart, when (God knows!) it has enough to corrupt and brutalise it within; then listen to the scandal, the malice, the invective, and the recrimination, upon the tongue to which God gave the eloquence of affection and benevolence, and the music of pity and consolation; then attend to the lips that can be eloquent and voluble on every subject but one,—that can descant on the market and its prices, on the world and its fashions and its politics, nay, on every little impulse of the feelings, and every fine-spun sentiment of the mind: but if the great God intrudes into conversation, his ways or his dispensations, his mercies and his loving-kindnesses, the tide begins to ebb, the glow of society dies away, and the cold and heartless silence betrays that an unwelcome stranger has made his appearance. Truly this is a magnificent fragment of that illustrious image; enough to show that it once existed, and that now it is shivered and broken. REV. C. WOLFE.

The Universal Corruption of Human Nature.

It is not without great cause, that the Scripture of God doth so many times call

all men here in this world by this word, **EARTH**: *O thou earth, earth, earth*, (saith Jeremiah,) *hear the word of the Lord*, xxii. 29. This our right name, calling, and title, *earth, earth, earth*, pronounced by the prophet, sheweth what we be indeed, by whatsoever other style, title, or dignity, men do call us. Thus he plainly named us, who knoweth best, both what we be, and what we ought of right to be called.

And thus he setteth us forth, speaking by his faithful apostle St. Paul: *All men, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin: there is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God: they are all gone out of the way, they are all unprofitable: there is none that doth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they have used craft and deceit; the poison of serpents is under their lips: their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and wretchedness are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.* Rom. iii. 13-18. And in another place St. Paul writeth thus: *God hath wrapped all nations in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all*, Rom. xi. 32. *The Scripture shutteth up all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ should be given unto them that believe*, Gal. iii. 22.

St. Paul, in many places, painteth us out in our colours, calling us the *children of the wrath of God*, when we be born, Eph. ii. 3: saying, also, that *we cannot think a good thought of ourselves*; much less can we say well or do well of ourselves. And the Wise Man saith, in the book of Proverbs, *the just man falleth seven times a day*, xxiv. 16. The most tried and approved man Job feared all his works. St. John the Baptist, *being sanctified in his mother's womb*, Luke i. 15, and praised before he was born, being called an angel, and great before the Lord, filled even from his birth with the Holy Ghost, the preparer of the way for our Saviour Christ, and commended of our Saviour Christ to be *more than a prophet*, and the greatest that ever was born of a woman, Luke vii. 28, yet he plainly granteth that he had need to be washed of Christ: he worthily extolleth and glorifieth his Lord and Master Christ, and

humbleth himself as unworthy to unbuckle his shoes, and giveth all honor and glory to God, Matt. iii. 11. So doth St. Paul, both oft and evidently, confess himself, what he was of himself; ever giving, as a most faithful servant, all praise to his Master and Saviour. So doth blessed St. John the Evangelist, in the name of himself and of all other holy men, be they never so just, make this open confession: *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: if we acknowledge our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us*, 1 John i. 8-10.

Wherefore the Wise Man, in the book called Ecclesiastes, maketh this true and general confession: *There is not one just man upon the earth, that doth good, and sinneth not*, vii. 20. And David is ashamed of his sin, but not to confess his sin, Psal. li. How oft, how earnestly, and lamentably doth he desire God's great mercy for his great offences, and that God should not enter into judgment with him! Psal. cxliii. 2. And again, how well weigheth this holy man his sins, when he confesseth that they be so many in number, and so hid, and hard to understand, that it is in a manner impossible to know, utter, or number them! Wherefore he, having a true, earnest, and deep contemplation and consideration of his sins, and yet not coming to the bottom of them, he maketh supplication to God *to forgive him his privy, secret, hid sins*; the knowledge of which he cannot attain unto, Psal. xix. 12. He weigheth rightly his sins from the original root and spring-head; perceiving inclinations, provocations, stirrings, stings, buds, branches, dregs, infections, tastes, feelings, and scents of them to continue in him still. Wherefore he saith, Mark, and *Behold, I was conceived in sins*, Psal. li. 5: he saith not sin, but, in the plural number, *sins*, forasmuch as out of one, as a fountain, spring all the rest. . . .

Thus we have heard, how evil we be of ourselves; how of ourselves, and by ourselves, we have no goodness, help, nor salvation: but contrariwise, sin, damnation, and death everlasting: which, if we deeply weigh and consider, we shall the better understand the great mercy of God, and how our salvation cometh only by Christ. For in ourselves, as of ourselves,

we find nothing, (2 Cor. iii. 5.) whereby, we may be delivered from this miserable captivity, into the which we were cast, through the envy of the devil, by breaking of God's commandment in our first parent Adam. We are all *become unclean: but we all are not able to cleanse ourselves, nor to make one another of us clean*, Psal. xlix. 7, 8. We are by nature *the children of God's wrath*, Eph. ii. 3: but we are not able to make ourselves the children and inheritors of God's glory. We are *sheep that run astray*, 1 Pet. ii. 25: but we cannot of our own power come again to the sheepfold: so great is our imperfection and weakness!

In ourselves, therefore, may we not glory, which, of ourselves, are nothing but sinful: neither may we rejoice in any works that we do; all which be so imperfect and impure, that they are not able to stand before the righteous judgment-seat of God: as the holy prophet David saith, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord: for no man that liveth shall be found righteous in thy sight*, Psal. cxlii. 2. To God, therefore, must we flee; or else shall we never find peace, rest, and quietness of conscience in our hearts. For he is *the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation*, 2 Cor. i. 3: he is the Lord with whom is *plenteous redemption*: Psal. cxxx. 7: he is the God which of *his own mercy saveth us*: and setteth out his charity and exceeding love towards us, in that of his own voluntary goodness, when we were perished, he saved us, and provided an everlasting kingdom for us.

And all these heavenly treasures are given us, not for our own deserts, merits, or good deeds, which of ourselves we have none, but of his mere mercy freely. And for whose sake? Truly, for Jesus Christ's sake, that pure and undefiled Lamb of God. He is that dearly beloved Son, for whose sake God is fully pacified, satisfied, and set at one with man. He is *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*, John i. 29: of whom only it may be truly spoken, that he did *all things well, and in his mouth was found no craft nor subtilty*, 1 Pet. ii. 22. None but he alone may say, *the prince of the world came, and in me he hath nothing*. And he alone may also say, *Which of you shall reprove me of any fault?* John viii. 46. He is the high and everlasting priest, which hath *offered himself once for all* upon the altar of the cross; and *with that*

one oblation hath made perfect for evermore them that are sanctified, Heb. vii. 27. He is the *alone Mediator between God and man*: which paid our ransom to God *with his own blood*, and with that hath he *cleansed us all from sin*, 1 John ii. 1, 2. He is the Physician, which healeth all our diseases. He is that Saviour, which saveth his people *from all their sins*, Matt. i. 21. To be short, he is that flowing and most plenteous fountain, *of whose fulness all we have received*. *For in him alone are all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God hidden*. And in him, and by him, have we from God the Father all good things, pertaining either to the body or to the soul.

HOMILY ON MISERY OF MAN.

Adam, in departing from the prescribed rule, forfeited the ornament of the image of God, in which he was formed, for himself and all his posterity. And whilst he wickedly affected a forbidden equality with God, came most to resemble the devil, and, like that evil spirit, deformed himself by his own crime: than which we can imagine nothing more hideous or base. The soul of the sinner is a horrid monster, mis-shapen, huge and devoid of light; mere darkness, mere confusion, every thing disjointed and out of order there; nothing properly placed; the things we should despise are esteemed, and what we should value most are neglected. Was any to take a clear view of his inward disposition in a faithful mirror, he would certainly, with the utmost horror, fly from himself as from a most terrible spectacle. And indeed, if holiness is the most beautiful ornament of the divine perfections, that thing must needs be the most deformed, which is not only the most unlike, but diametrically opposite to that ornamental beauty. This is that mentioned, Jam. i. 21. *filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness*; to this it is owing, that man is become abominable in the sight of God, who cannot but turn away the radiant eyes of his unspotted holiness, Hab. i. 13.

Moreover, Adam propagated this vile semblance of the devil to his posterity, not excepting those whom grace has sanctified. For he also *begat Seth in his own likeness, after his image*, Gen. v. 3. I do not chiefly apply this to the likeness of the human nature, much less to the likeness of that holiness which God gra-

ciously restored to Adam, as Chrysostom, Lyranus and Clarius contend for. For, 1st. Holiness and righteousness are not the image of any man, but of God. 2dly. Adam is never proposed in Scripture as the pattern or author of holiness, but as the person by whom sin entered into the world, Rom. v. 12. 3dly. The image of holiness, restored in the parent by grace, is never propagated to the son by natural generation. Things natural are propagated, but things supernatural are *alone of God that sheweth mercy*, Rom. ix. 16. But by this likeness of Adam, I understand the vicious corruption of his nature. 1st. Because the image of Adam, after Seth was begotten, is set in opposition to the image of God, after which Adam was created. 2dly. Because the apostle, in like manner, opposes, 1 Cor. xv. 49, the image of the *earthly* Adam, as consisting of sin and pollution, to the image of the *heavenly* Adam, which consists in holiness and glory. 3dly. Because the whole analogy of Scripture evinces, that a *clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean*, and that *what is born out of the flesh is flesh*, Job xiv. 4.—John iii. 6.

This turpitude of sin is by Paul called the *old man*, Eph. iv. 22.—Col. iii. 9. *Man*, because it overspreads the whole man, and defiles both soul and body; in the soul it has possession of the understanding, will, and affections.

It has involved the understanding in horrid darkness, whereby it is grossly ignorant of divine things, Eph. iv. 18. So that the natural or animal man, or he that has no other spirit but his soul, and destitute of the Spirit of God, Judg. v. 29, *receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. And as he discerns no wisdom in divine things worthy of God, so, with intolerable presumption, he represents them under those disagreeable notions which his own foolish and self-conceited wisdom hath devised; and while he attempts to correct the wisdom of God, which he cannot understand, he transfigures it, as much as he can, to downright folly; and this is that which is said, Rom. i. 22, 23. *professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, &c.*

But the sinner is not only under blindness, but is in love with his blindness.

He glories that he really sees, even when he is most blind, John ix. 40, 41. And when, to the utmost of his power, he resists the true light, though discovering itself in a most pleasing manner, by the works of Divine Providence, by the word of God, and by some sparkling rays of the Spirit; *he loves darkness rather than light; hateth the light, neither cometh to the light*, John iii. 19, 20. Of such Job witnesseth, *that they are of those that rebel against the light*, Job xxiv. 13. They have an aversion to all light, both that which is natural, which, hinders them from perpetrating their crimes in the sight of the world, and that which is moral, which convinces them of the duty they ought certainly to perform, but which they wickedly neglect. They endeavour to stifle it by disputing both against the word of God and their own conscience. Hence those impious expressions of some, who wish that this or the other truth that opposes their lusts, was not to be found in the word of God. . . .

Nor is the will less corrupt; for, 1st. It is averse to all that is truly good, Job xxi. 14. *Therefore they say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. And when the great things of the law are written to them, they are counted as a strange thing*; as of no very great moment, and what they have no concern with, Hos. viii. 12. And how can it be otherwise? For since by reason of their blindness, they do not discern the excellency of true virtue, but on the contrary find many things in the practice of it which are opposite to their unruly lusts, their mind is averse to it: *they hate the good*, Micah iii. 2.

Secondly, It is driven on to evil with great impetuosity; *They love the evil*, Micah iii. 2, to a degree indeed that not some, but *every imagination of the heart of man*; not at some, but *at all times*; not in some, but in every measure, *is only evil*, Gen. vi. 5. Now this is to be understood, not only of the giants in the first ages, as appears by comparing this place with chap. viii. 21. where almost the same words are used concerning men in future periods of time. *I will not again*, says God, *curse the ground any more, because, or though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth*. Whereby it is intimated, that *evil imagination* is the common blemish of all mankind. To this

also may be referred, what Paul writes, Rom. viii. 7. *the carnal mind, the wisdom of the flesh*, that which it willingly imagines, lusts after as wisdom, or that action, which the carnal mind contrives, *is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

Nay, 3dly. The desire of evil is so great, that it is irritated by that very law of God which forbids, it, and is more impetuously hurried on to things forbidden only because they are prohibited. Without the driving or impelling force of the law, sin lies dormant and lifeless; but when the commandment comes, it revives and is put in motion, and, taking occasion by the commandment, works all manner of concupiscence to a pitch, that every check being hurtful, *by the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful*, Rom. vii. 8, 9, 11, 13. Chrysostom beautifully says, ‘When we lust after any thing, and are afterwards restrained, this only blows up the flame of lust to a higher degree.’ . . .

Nor indeed is the body itself free from the tyrannical dominion of sin: the members are agitated by such an inordinate flow of blood and spirits, that they easily carry away the mind, while it is forgetful of her own dignity. And, indeed, that pleasure which the members have in sin, or which they seek for by sinning, is the cause of most sins, even spiritual sins not excepted, and of their reasoning against the law of God. This perverseness and corruption is by the apostle called *the law in the members*, that power and efficacy of sin dwelling in the body, which had frequently forced it to a criminal compliance, and had *warred against the law of his mind*: that is, against the law of God inscribed on the mind by nature and grace, and in which the mind delights, *and had brought him into captivity*, and having once taken hold of him, does not let him go, Rom. vii. 23. Certainly the members seduce and prove offensive, which Job, being afraid of, *made a covenant with his eyes; that they should not look upon a maid*, Job xxxi. 1. And David prayed, *turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, Ps. cxix. 37. And wisdom advises, to *put a knife to thy throat if thou be a man given to appetite*, Prov. xxiii. 2. All these plainly declare the danger arising to religion from the members.

As therefore this corruption wholly over-spreads all the parts and faculties of man, it is therefore called *man*. But it goes by the name of the *old man*: 1st. Because it sprung up in Paradise itself at the beginning, by the infection of the tempting serpent, and owes its original to that old dragon mentioned, Rev. xii. 9. 2dly. Because it is contemporary with every man in particular, Ps. li. 7. and if not always in order of time, yet of nature, precedes man’s gracious regeneration. 3dly. Because we ought to abolish, reject and abhor it, as a worthless and antiquated thing, which is wore out and disfigured by long use; just as *old things pass away, that all things may become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. WITSIUS.

Those who have the audacity to attribute to God the cause of their sins, under the pretext that we assert that men are naturally corrupted, would do well to consider the grounds on which they rest, and whether it is not a great crime in them to contemplate the work of God in their corruption, instead of seeking it in the nature which Adam received before his transgression. Let us ever remember, to impute our ruin to the depravation of our nature, and not to nature itself, lest we accuse God, the author and preserver of our being, as though our misery proceeded from him. It is perfectly true, that this mortal evil is deeply rooted in our nature. But it is certain, that this evil hath occurred through sin, superinduced. We ought, therefore, to complain of ourselves alone. This the Scriptures particularly inculcate. *Lo, this only have I found*, saith the Preacher, *that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions*. From whence it appears clearly, that it is to man alone that his ruin must be imputed; since, having received by the favor of God a natural uprightness, he hath, by his own folly, fallen into vanity. CALVIN.

This Doctrine proved by our forgetfulness of the world to come.

WHEN it is considered that the doctrine of a life to come is ascertained by the advent of the Messiah, with a degree of evidence so superior to that which attaches to any other futurity, that he who refuses to believe it, on his testimony, would not

be persuaded although one rose from the dead, the propensity to disregard it, however general, is the most astonishing phenomenon in nature. Man is naturally a prospective creature, endowed not only with a capacity of comparing the present with the past, but also of anticipating the future, and dwelling with anxious rumination on scenes which are yet remote. He is capable of carrying his views, of attaching his anxieties, to a period much more distant than that which measures the limits of his present existence; capable, we distinctly perceive, of plunging into the depths of future duration, of identifying himself with the sentiments and opinions of a distant age, and of enjoying by anticipation the fame of which he is aware he shall never be conscious, and the praises he shall never hear. So strongly is he disposed to link his feelings with futurity, that shadows become realities when contemplated as subsisting there; and the phantom of posthumous celebrity, the faint image of his being, impressed on future generations, is often preferred to the whole of his present existence, with all its warm and vivid realities. The complexion of the day that is passing over him, is determined by the anticipations of the morrow: the present borrows its brightness and its gloom from the future, which presenting itself to his contemplation as in a mirror, incessantly agitates him with apparitions of terror or delight. In the calculations of interest, the mind is affected in the same manner; it is perpetuity which stamps its value on whatever we possess, so that the lowest epicure would prefer a small accession to his property, to the most exquisite repast; and none are found so careless of futurity, as not to prefer the inheritance he may bequeath, to one of equal value, the title to which expires with his life.

How is it then that we find it so difficult to prevail upon men to fix their attention firmly on another world, that real future existence which reason assures us is probable, which revelation teaches us is certain, which is separated from us by so narrow a boundary, and into which thousands of our fellow creatures are passing every moment? How is it that the professed followers of Him especially who descended from heaven, who came forth from the Father to conduct us thither, are so indisposed to turn their thoughts and contem-

plations to that unchanging state of being, into which they are so shortly to enter! It is not, we perceive, that to move forward is not congenial with our mental constitution: it is not because we are so enchanted with the present scene, as to be incapable of diverting our attention from it; for we are continually disquieted by a restless desire of something future: it is not because we are seldom warned or reminded of another state of existence; for every funeral bell, every opening grave, every symptom of decay within, and of change without, affords us a separate warning.

Were any other event of far inferior moment, ascertained by evidence, which made but a distant approach to that which attests the certainty of a life to come; had we equal assurance that after a very limited, though uncertain period, we should be called to migrate into a distant land, whence we were never to return, the intelligence would fill every breast with solicitude; it would become the theme of every tongue; and we should avail ourselves with the utmost eagerness of all the means of information respecting the prospects which awaited us in that unknown country. Much of our attention would be occupied in preparing for our departure; we should cease to consider the place we now inhabit as our home, and nothing would be considered as of moment, but as it bore upon our future destination. How strange is it then, that with the certainty we all possess of shortly entering into another world, we avert our eyes as much as possible from the prospect; that we seldom permit it to penetrate us; and that the moment the recollection recurs, we hasten to dismiss it, as an unwelcome intrusion! Is it not surprising that the volume we profess to recognise as the record of immortality, and the sole depository of whatever information it is possible to obtain respecting the portion which awaits us, should be consigned to neglect, and rarely, if ever, consulted with the serious intention of ascertaining our future condition?

That a creature formed for an endless duration should be disposed to turn his attention from that object, and to contract his views and prospects within a circle which, compared to eternity, is but a mathematical point, is truly astonishing; and as it is impossible to account for it from

the natural constitution of the mind, it must originate in some great *moral* cause. It shows that some strange catastrophe has befallen the species; that some deep and radical malady is inherent in the moral system. Though philosophers of a certain description may attempt to explain and justify it on some ingenious hypothesis, yet in spite of metaphysical subtleties, the alarming inquiry will still return—How is it that the disposition of mankind is so much at variance with their prospects? that no train of reflections is more unwelcome than that which is connected with their eternal home? If the change is considered as a happy one; if the final abode to which we are hastening is supposed to be an improvement on the present, why shrink back from it with aversion? If it is contemplated as a state of suffering, it is natural to inquire what it is that has invested it with so dark and sombre a character! What is it which has enveloped that species of futurities in a gloom which pervades no other? If the indisposition to realise a life to come arises in any measure from a vague presentiment that it will bring us, so to speak, into a closer contact with the Deity, by presenting clearer manifestations of his character and perfections, (and who can doubt that this is a principal cause?) the proof it affords of a great deterioration in our moral condition is complete. For who will suppose it possible, a disposition to hide himself from his Creator should be an original part of the constitution of a reasonable creature? or what more portentous and unnatural than for him that is formed, to shun the presence of his Maker, and to place his felicity in the forgetfulness of him *in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being*? If he is pained and disquieted whenever he is forcibly reminded of Him whose power sustains, and whose bounty replenishes the universe with whatever is good and fair; if the source of being and of happiness is the object of terror, instead of confidence and love, it is not easy to conceive what can afford a stronger conviction of guilt, or a more certain presage of danger.

The conclusion to which we are conducted is confirmed by inspiration, which assures us that a great revolution has actually befallen the species; and that in consequence of the entrance of sin into the world, we have incurred the forfeiture

of the divine favor, and the loss of the divine image. REV. R. HALL.

The Heart is the Source of all Evil.

FOR the seat and subject of this law of sin, the Scripture everywhere assigns it to be the heart. There indwelling sin keeps its especial residence. It hath invaded and possessed the throne of God himself; *Madness is in the heart of men while they live*, Eccles. ix. 3. This is their madness, or the root of all that madness which appears in their lives. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*, Matt. xv. 19.

There are many outward temptations and provocations that befall men, which excite and stir them up unto these evils; but they do but as it were open the vessel, and let out what is laid up and stored in it. The root, rise, and spring of all these things is in the heart. Temptations and occasions put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. Hence is that summary description of the whole work and effect of this law of sin, *Every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually*, Gen. vi. 5. So also, chap. viii. 21. The whole work of the law of sin, from its first rise, its first coining of actual sin, is here described; and its seat, its workhouse, is said to be the heart; and so it is called by our Saviour, *the evil treasure of the heart*, Luke vi. 45. *An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*. This treasure is the prevailing principle of moral actions that is in men. So in the beginning of the verse, our Saviour calls grace *the good treasure of the heart* of a good man, whence that which is good doth proceed. It is a principle constantly and abundantly inciting and stirring up unto, and consequently bringing forth, actions conformable and like unto it, of the same kind and nature with itself. And it is also called a treasure for its abundance. It will never be exhausted; it is not wasted by men's spending on it: yea, the more lavish men are of this stock, the more they draw out of this treasure, the more it grows and abounds. As men do not spend their grace, but increase it by its exercise, no more do they their indwelling sin. The more men exercise their grace in duties of obedience, the more it is strengthened and increased;

and the more men exert and put forth the fruits of their lust, the more is that enraged and increased in them; it feeds upon itself, swallows up its own poison, and grows thereby. The more men sin, the more they are inclined unto sin. It is from the deceitfulness of this law of sin, whereof we shall speak afterward at large, that men persuade themselves, that by this or that particular sin, they shall so satisfy their lusts, as that they shall need to sin no more. Every sin increaseth the principle, and fortifieth the habit of sinning. It is an evil treasure that increaseth by doing evil. And where doth this treasure lie? It is in the heart. There it is laid up, there it is kept in safety. All the men in the world, all the angels in heaven, cannot dispossess a man of this treasure; it is so safely stored in the heart.

DR. JOHN OWEN.

The Heart is at enmity against God.

THE carnal mind is enmity against God. Rom. viii. 7. That which is here called, *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς*, 'the wisdom of the flesh,' is the same with the law of sin, which we insist on. And what says he hereof? Why it is *ἐχθρὰ εἰς Θεόν*, 'enmity against God.' It is not only an enemy, for so possibly some reconciliation of it unto God might be made; but it is *enmity itself*, and so not capable of accepting any terms of peace. Enemies may be reconciled, but enmity cannot. Yea the only way to reconcile enemies, is to destroy the enmity. So the apostle in another case tells us, *We who were enemies, are reconciled unto God*, Rom. v. 10. That is a work compassed and brought about by the blood of Christ, the reconciling of the greatest enemies. But when he comes to speak of enmity, there is no way for it, but it must be abolished and destroyed, *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity*, Eph. ii. 15. There is no way to deal with any enmity whatever, but by its abolition or destruction. . .

It may not be so effectual and powerful in operation, as where it hath more life and vigor, but it is enmity still. As every drop of poison is poison and will infect, and every spark of fire is fire and will burn, so is every thing of the law of sin, the last, the least of it; it is enmity; it will poison, it will burn. . . . Our apostle, who may well be supposed to have made as great a progress in the subduing of it, as any one on the earth, yet after all cries

out for deliverance, as from an irreconcilable enemy, Rom. vii. 24. The meanest acting, the meanest and most imperceptible working of it, is the acting and working of enmity. Mortification abates of its force, but doth not change its nature. Grace changeth the nature of man, but nothing can change the nature of sin. Whatever effect be wrought upon it, there is no effect wrought in it, but that it is enmity still, sin still. . . .

It is not only said to be enmity, but it is said to be *enmity against God*. It hath chosen a great enemy indeed. It is in sundry places proposed as our enemy; *Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. They are enemies to the soul, that is, to ourselves. Sometimes as an enemy to the Spirit that is in us; *the flesh lusteth, or fighteth against the Spirit*, Gal. v. 17. It fights against the spirit, or the spiritual principle that is in us, to conquer it; it fights against our souls to destroy them. It hath special ends and designs against our souls, and against the principle of grace that is in us; but its proper, formal object is God; it is *enmity against God*. It is its work to oppose grace; it is a consequent of its work to oppose our souls, which follows upon what it doth, more than what it intends; but its nature and formal design is to oppose God. God, as the lawgiver; God, as holy; God, as the Author of the Gospel, a way of salvation by grace and not by works, is the direct object of the law of sin. Why doth it oppose duty, so that the good we would do, we do not, either as to matter or manner? Why doth it render the soul carnal, indisposed, unbelieving, unspiritual, weary, wandering? It is because of its enmity to God, whom the soul aims to have communion withal in duty. It hath, as it were, that command from Satan, which the Assyrians had from their king, *Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel*, 1 Kings xxii. 31. It is neither great nor small, but God himself, the King of Israel, that sin sets itself against. . .

It is God himself that is aimed at. It is true, the pleasures, the wages of sin, do greatly influence the sensual, carnal affections of men; but it is the holiness and authority of God that sin itself rises up against; it hates the yoke of the Lord. *Thou hast been weary of me*, saith God to sinners, and that during their performance

of abundance of duties. Every act of sin is a fruit of being weary of God. Thus Job tells us what lies at the bottom in the heart of sinners; *They say to the Lord, Depart from us*, it is enmity against him and aversation from him. Here lies the formal nature of every sin—it is an opposition to God, a casting off his yoke, a breaking off the dependence which the creature ought to have on the Creator. And the apostle gives the reason why he affirms *the carnal mind to be enmity against God*, namely, because *it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be*, Rom. viii. 7. It never is, nor will, nor can be subject to God, its whole nature consisting in an opposition to him. The soul wherein it is, may be subject to the law of God, but this law of sin sets up in contrariety unto it, and will not be in subjection. . . .

If there were any thing of God, his nature, properties, his mind or will, his law or Gospel, any duty of obedience to him, of communion with him, that sin had not an enmity against, the soul might have a constant shelter and retreat within itself, by applying itself to that of God, to that of duty towards him, to that of communion with him, that sin would make no opposition against. But the enmity lies against God and all of God, and every thing wherein or whereby we have to do with him. It is not subject to the law, nor any part or parcel, word or tittle of the law. Whatever is opposite to any thing as such, is opposite unto all of it. Sin is enmity to God as God, and therefore to all of God. Not his goodness, not his holiness, not his mercy, not his grace, not his promises, there is not any thing of him, which it doth not make head against, nor any duty, private, public, in the heart, in external works, which it opposeth not. And the nearer, if I may so say, any thing is to God, the greater is its enmity unto it. The more of spirituality and holiness is in any thing, the greater is its enmity. That which hath most of God, hath most of its opposition. Concerning them in whom this law is most predominant, God says, *Ye have set at nought all my counsel, and you would have none of my reproofs*, Prov. i. 25. Not this or that part of God's counsel, his mind or will is opposed, but all his counsel, whatever he calleth for or guideth unto, in every particular of it, all is set at nought, and nothing of his reproof attended unto. A man would think it not

very strange that sin should maintain an enmity against God in his law, which comes to judge it, to condemn it; but it raiseth a greater enmity against him in his Gospel, wherein he tenders mercy and pardon, as a deliverance from it, and that merely because more of the glorious properties of God's nature, more of his excellencies and condescension, is manifested therein, than in the other.

DR. J. OWEN.

Though the more positive workings of this enmity do not (perhaps with the most) so ordinarily discover themselves; and they do not see or suspect that they hate him, while they are not urged to self-reflection; and when they are, hardly admit a conviction that they do: yet the matter carries its own evidence with it, and would soon be put beyond a question, if men were willing to understand the truth of their own case. For whence else do they so slowly entertain the knowledge of God, when the whole earth is full of his glory? When so manifest prints and footsteps of his wisdom, power, and goodness, do offer themselves to view in every creature, whence can it be, but that they like not to retain him in their knowledge? Rom. i. And that their very hearts say to him, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*? Job xxi. Why is so bright a light not observed, but that it shines amidst a malignant darkness, that, resisting, comprehends it not? Why are the thoughts of God so unpleasant to men, and unfrequent, that when one would suppose no thoughts should be so obvious, none so welcome, yet it is become the character of an unrenewed man to forget God, Psal. ix. or not to have him in all his thoughts? Psal. x. Why do men decline his acquaintance, live voluntary strangers to him all their days, and as without him in the world? Ephes. ii. Why are men so averse to trust him, and turn to him, even upon so mighty assurances? What makes them shy to take his word, but rather count him a liar, though they know it inconsistent with his nature; and can form no notion of God, without including this conception therein, that he cannot lie; when as yet they can ordinarily trust one another, though there be so much colour to say, *All men are liars*? Why do they resist his authority, against which they cannot dispute, and disobey his commands, unto which they

cannot devise to frame an exception? What, but the spirit of enmity, can make them regret so easy a yoke, reject so light a burthen, shun and fly off from so peaceful and pleasant paths; yea, and take ways that so manifestly take hold of hell, and lead down to the chambers of death, rather choosing to perish than obey? Is not this the very height of enmity? What further proof would we seek of, a disaffected and implacable heart? Yet to all this, we may cast in that fearful addition, their saying in their heart, No God, Psal. xiv. as if they should say, O that there were none! This is enmity, not only to the highest pitch of wickedness, (to wish their common Parent extinct, the Author of their being,) but even unto madness itself. For in the forgetful heat of this transport, it is not thought on that they wish the most absolute impossibility, and that, if it were possible, they wish, with his, the extinction of their own, and of all being; and that the sense of their hearts, put into words, would amount to no less than a direful and most horrid execration and curse upon God, and the whole creation of God at once! as if by the blasphemy of their poisonous breath they would wither all nature, blast the whole universe of being, and make it fade, languish, and drop into nothing. This is to set their mouth against heaven and earth, themselves, and all things at once, as if they thought their feeble breath should overpower the omnipotent word, shake and shiver the adamantine pillars of heaven and earth, and the almighty *fiat* be defeated by their *nay*; striking at the root of all! So fitly is it said, The *fool* hath in his heart muttered thus! Nor are there few such fools: but this is plainly given us as the common character of apostate man, the whole revolted race; of whom it is said, in very general terms, *They all are gone back, there is none that doeth good*. This is their sense, one and all; that is, comparatively; and the true state of the case being laid before them, it is more their temper and sense to say *no* God, than to repent, and turn to him. What mad enmity is this! Nor can we devise into what else to resolve it.

REV. J. HOWE.

Value of the Immortal Soul.

PERHAPS, were we to inform you, that, in order to save your souls, God had subverted formerly all the laws of nature, or

ANTH.

to use the language of a prophet, that he had *shaken the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land*, Hag. ii. 6. Perhaps, were we to tell you, that, in order to save your souls, God deferred the end of the world, and put off the last vicissitudes, that are to put a period to the duration of this universe, that, according to St. Peter, *the Lord is long-suffering to us-ward*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Perhaps, were we to affirm, that in order to save our souls, he will come one day on the clouds of heaven, sitting on a throne, surrounded with glorious angels, accompanied with myriads of shouting voices, to deliver them with the greater pomp, and to save them with more splendor. Perhaps, by relating all these mighty works done for our souls, we might excite in you ideas of their dignity more lively than that which we have chosen, and to which we intend to confine our attention. But surmount, if you can, your customary indolence, and form an adequate idea of the dignity of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, in order the better to judge of the dignity of those souls, of which his blood was the price.

Go, learn it in heaven. Behold the Deity. Approach his throne. Observe the *thousand thousands ministering unto him, ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him*, Dan. vii. 10. See his eyes sparkling with fire, and his majesty and glory filling his sanctuary, and, by the dignity of the victim sacrificed, judge of the value of the sacrifice.

Go, study it in all the economies that preceded this sacrifice. Observe the types, which prefigured it; the shadows, that traced it out; the ceremonies, which depicted it; and, by the pomp of the preparations, judge of the dignity of the substance prepared.

Go, learn it on Mount Calvary. Behold the wrath that fell on the head of Jesus Christ! Behold his blood pouring out upon the earth, and him, your Saviour, drinking the bitter cup of divine displeasure! See his hands and his feet nailed to the cross, and his whole body one great wound; observe the unbridled populace foaming with rage around the cross, and glutting their savage souls with his barbarous sufferings; and, by the horror of the causes, that contributed to his death, judge of the death itself!

Go to the infidel, and let him teach you the dignity of the sacrifice of Christ. Re-

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member, on this account he attacks Christianity, and he hath some shew of reason for doing so; for if this religion may be attacked on any side, with the least hope of success, it is on this. The truths of the Christian religion are incontestible: but if there be any one article of the Gospel, which requires an entire docility of mind, an absolute submission of heart, a perfect deference to God, who speaks, it is the article of the sacrifice of the cross. Weigh the objections, and by the greatness of the difficulties judge of the dignity of the mystery.

Recollect, Christian! God thought fit to require the blood of his Son for the redemption of our souls. These souls must have been very precious in the sight of God, since he redeemed them at a price so immense. The misery into which they were liable to be plunged, must have been extremely terrible, since God thought proper to make such great efforts to save them from it. The felicity, of which they are capable, and to which the Lord intends to elevate them, must be infinitely valuable, since it cost him so much to bring them to it. For what in the universe is of equal value with the blood of the Son of God? Disappear, all ye other miracles, wrought in favour of our souls! ye astonishing prodigies, that confirmed the Gospel! thou, delay of the consummation of all things! ye great and terrible signs of the second coming of the Son of God! Vanish before the miracle of the cross; for the cross shines you all into darkness and shade. This glorious light makes your glimmering vanish, and after my imagination is filled with the tremendous dignity of this sacrifice. I can see nothing great beside. But, if God hath estimated our souls at such a rate, shall we set a low price on them? If he hath given so much for them, do we imagine we can give too much for them? If, for their redemption, he hath sacrificed the most valuable person in heaven, do we imagine there is any thing upon earth too great to give up for them?

No, no, my brethren! after what we have heard, we ought to believe, that there is no shadow of exaggeration in this exclamation of Jesus Christ, *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* I do not certainly know what our Saviour meant to say, whether he intended to speak of a man,

who should *gain the whole world*, and instantly *lose his soul*; or of one, who should not *lose his soul* till long after he had obtained *the whole world*, and had reigned over it through the course of a long life. But I do know, that the words are true, even in the most extensive sense. Suppose a man, who should not only enjoy universal empire for one whole age, but for a period equal to the duration of the world itself; the proposition that is implied in the words of Jesus Christ is applicable to him. Such a soul as we have described, a soul so excellent in its nature, so extensive in its duration, so precious through its redemption; a soul capable of acquiring so much knowledge, of conceiving so many desires, of experiencing so much remorse, of feeling so many pleasures and pains? a soul that must subsist beyond all time, and perpetuate itself to eternity; a soul redeemed by the blood of the Son of God? a soul so valuable ought to be preferred before all things, and nothing is too precious to be given for its exchange. *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

SAURIN.

WHEN God made a soul, it was only, *Faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram*. He spake the word, and it was done. But when man had lost this soul which the Spirit of God breathed into him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the re-implacing the Divine image, for the rescuing it from the devil's power, for the re-entitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the creation; he was fain to contract Divinity to a span, to send a person to die for us, who of himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying; he prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom, a Person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked upon the pavements of heaven; whose feet were clothed with stars, whose

eyes were brighter than the sun, whose voice is louder than thunder, whose understanding is larger than that infinite space, which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a Person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God: this was the only Person that was designed, in the eternal decrees of the Divine predestination, to pay the price of a soul, to ransom us from death; less than this Person could not do it. For although a soul in its essence is finite, yet there were many infinities which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls. For all which because provision was to be made, nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul who was lost to infinite and eternal ages, who was to be afflicted with insupportable and undetermined, that is, next to infinite, pains; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one half of the abyss, and I think the lesser. For that this Person, who was God eternal, should be lessened in all his appearances to a span, to the little dimensions of a man; and that he should really become very contemptibly little, although at the same time he was infinitely and unalterably great; that is, essential, natural, and necessary felicity, should turn into an intolerable, violent, and immense calamity to his person; that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our redemption, unless he would suffer that horrid misery, which that lost soul should suffer; as it represents the glories of his goodness, who used such rare and admirable instruments in actuating the designs of his mercy, so it shows our condition to have been very desperate, and our loss invaluable.

A soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures of the Son of God; and yet we throw it away for the exchange of sins, that a man naturally is ashamed to own. I need not say we lose our soul to save our lives; for, though that was our blessed Saviour's instance of the great unreasonableness of men, who by 'saving their lives lose them,' that is, in the great account of doomsday; though this, I say, be extremely unreasonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain; nothing to excuse

him with God, but something in the accounts of timorous men; but, to lose our souls with swearing, that unprofitable, dishonorable, and unpleasant vice; to lose our souls with disobedience or rebellion, a vice that brings a curse and danger all the way in this life; to lose our souls with drunkenness, a vice which is painful and sickly in the very acting it, which hastens our damnation by shortening our lives; are instances fit to be put in the stories of fools and madmen. And all this vice is a degree of the same unreasonableness; the most splendid temptation being nothing but a pretty well-weaved fallacy, a mere trick, a sophism, and a cheating and abusing the understanding. But that which I consider here is, that it is an affront and contradiction to the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul, in which our interest is so concerned; a soul which he who made it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase to be made by the exchange of his Son, the eternal Son of God. To which also I add this additional account, that a soul is so greatly valued by God, that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. For, therefore, whosoever should commit a sin to save kingdoms from perishing; or, if the case should be put, that all the good men, and good causes, and good things in this world, were to be destroyed by tyranny, and it were in our power by perjury to save all these; that doing this sin would be so far from hallowing the crime, that it were to offer to God a sacrifice of what he most hates, and to serve him with swine's blood; and the rescuing all these from a tyrant, or a hangman, could not be pleasing to God upon these terms, because a soul is lost by it; which is, in itself, a greater loss and misery than all the evils in the world put together can outbalance; and a loss of that thing for which Christ gave his blood a price. Persecutions, and temporal death in holy men, and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and therefore not to be bought off with the loss of a soul, which is a real, and an intolerable calamity. And if God, for his own sake, would not have all the world saved by sin, that is, by the hazarding of a soul, we should do well for our own sakes not to lose a soul for trifles, for things that make us here to be miserable, and even here also to be ashamed.

BR. TAYLOR.

What an astonishing being is the human soul! it is a being, i. e. a single uncompounded substance, a perfect one, an entire monad, or a one undivided living existence! a spirit, a self-active, rational being, endued with understanding, will, and affections: a creature that can reason concerning God and itself, and is able to survey its own being and ideas; and, what is more wonderful, it is able to survey God's being and ideas; and to compare the idea of the nature of God, and the idea of our own nature together, and to draw inferences from God and ourselves, and to understand the agreement or disagreement between God and ourselves. What an astonishing creature is this, that can survey the ideas of God, angels, men, and devils, in ten thousand modes of perception! a creature that is in a state of thought, or consciousness, incessant, unavoidable, unsuppressible, and inextinguishable: a creature that is in a state of volition and unavoidable motion, in a state of incessant and unavoidable capacity of receiving ideas, new ideas, from heaven, earth, and hell, all through life, and to eternity!

What a grand idea of the soul is this! it cannot cease from thought by its own choice or power, or by the choice and power of any creature. This soul is an image of the spirituality, eternity, omnipresence, immutability, life, omnipotence, and omniscience of God. There is no other creature like God, but the soul, in all this vast universe. It is a spirit, and therefore like God the supreme Spirit---it is eternal in its duration and desires, and therefore an image of the eternity of God---it flies through infinite space in a moment of time, and in this view it is an image of the omnipresence of God---it is quite unchangeable in its essence, and therefore it resembles the immutability of God---it hath an amazing self-activity and power to move the body, and ten thousand other bodies around us, and therefore it resembles the life and omnipotence of God---the soul hath an inextinguishable thirst after fresh knowledge, or new ideas of truth, and thus it resembles the omniscience of God. Who but an idiot or a madman would undervalue, abuse, or expose to ruin a soul of such tremendous powers, of such infinite worth, and of such capacities of enjoying happiness, as long as God shall possess his own infinite perfections?

To save this soul God employed his eternal mind: to redeem this soul the Son of God came down to dwell in the dust: one soul cost more than the starry heavens, more than the worth of all the angels of God: to convince this soul, the Holy Spirit has, in a moment, produced visible changes in the order of nature: to instruct and entertain this soul he has given a divine revelation of the glorious Gospel, and raised up the best men in all ages to employ their immortal powers and talents: to refine and enlarge this soul he has exerted his sanctifying grace: to inhabit this soul the eternal Spirit came down from heaven: to wash this soul the blood of God was shed: to clothe this soul the righteousness of God is wrought out: to beautify this soul divine grace is given: to comfort this soul the promises of God are made: to guard this soul legions of angels are every moment on the wing: to destroy this soul the devil's legions are hourly employed: to serve the interests of this soul the structure of the world is preserved: yea, for the sake of this soul the world itself was created: on the behalf of this soul the Lord Jesus incessantly pleads before the throne: to defend and preserve this soul God's infinite perfections are every moment exerted: to establish the peace, purity, and strength of this soul God swears a most tremendous OATH: and to raise the power and happiness of this soul to eternal heights, all heaven is prepared, and God absolutely and irrevocably bestows himself.

DR. RYLAND.

The Proper Employment of the Soul, but its natural Inability.

THE soul of man comes into the world endued with all those faculties which are comprehended under the names of understanding, memory, and affections: man has an Understanding, that can soar to unknown heights in science, and fathom the deepest mysteries of nature---powers of reasoning, which can penetrate the most secret recesses of knowledge, and develope the greatest intricacies---comprehension of mind to embrace, at once, an almost endless variety of important subjects: he is possessed of a Memory, which can preserve the record of past experience, and former acquisitions in knowledge, to an extent of which we know not the limits: man has a Heart too---a heart that can flame with love, or rankle with hatred---

that can burn with anger, or smile with complacency—a heart which can be elevated with hope, or depressed with fear—exulting with joy, or agonised with sorrow. When all these passions and powers of the soul are called into exercise, by those occasions which were intended by God to excite them, it is in its right state—it lives: this will be allowed; but how does it appear that we are dead? Can any one be at a loss to know what those occasions are? What is the appropriate object of all the faculties of the soul? can any one doubt whether the proper and peculiar employment of the understanding be not to meditate on the glories of that God, whose power and goodness called us into being and gave us a reasonable soul?—whether it is not appropriately exercised when it adores, in the works of the creation, the hand of the great Architect; or when it refers every event of providence to the immediate agency of that wise Governor, who sits at the helm? will any one hesitate to allow that every passion of the soul should point to God?—whether we should not love him most, who is indeed the most amiable; and fear him most, who is the most terrible in his anger?—whether we ought not to hate that most, which most he hates; and rejoice in that most, which most he approves?—and whether, though we may admire, love, fear, and rejoice in certain created things, we are not in all seasons to have all our thoughts ultimately converging to God? That this is the reasonable condition of the soul and these its appropriate employments, is perfectly obvious to any one who will reflect that God is, in fact, the All in All of the universe—that nothing exists without him—that nothing is good or beautiful without him—that nothing can give us pleasure without his agency: he pervades the universe—he surrounds it—he upholds it—he fills it! it is all his own: he does every thing in it. Is the human soul, then, designed to do any thing but for God? the Scripture, however, summarily confirms the conclusions of our reason; for it says, *the Lord hath made all things for himself*. But does the soul of man naturally thus embrace the Deity, as the only suitable object of his affections? do we not know that God is in none of his thoughts, instead of being in all of them? he has passions, indeed, and the sensibility of them is sometimes vivid; but the

exercise of them is invariably confined to the things of this world, and never voluntarily and naturally ascends to God: set the Deity before him as an amiable, faithful, and gracious Being—such an exhibition excites no emotion in his breast—no love, no joy, no confidence: array Jehovah in his terrors before the sinner—he will shrink, but he does not relent—he fears punishment, but he does not fear God: change the theme, and tell him of the wonders of redeeming love—here is employment for his understanding to trace the wisdom of God in the plan of redemption, and scope for the exercise of his affections in the consideration of the love of Christ and his own interest in it:—but no! nothing of this sort can gain his attention:—it possesses no interest for him—he is deaf to *the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely*: strike what string you will, there is no chord in his heart that sounds in unison. What must we say of the state of that soul?—that it is dead; for it performs no one function of spiritual life: all in it is torpid—inanimate—dead! There is a further propriety in calling the natural state of the soul by the name of death: there is in the dead body no power to return to life; neither is there in the soul any ability to attain to spiritual life, or the exercise of holy affections toward God: nay, more—there is no Will to this end—a paralytic person may have no power to use his limbs, but he may possess the desire—whereas a dead person has not even the desire—so the natural soul has no will to live again unto God. There is in the dead body no spark of life, which time or care may fan into a flame: it will remain a corpse: nothing but the power of God can raise it from the dead. In like manner there is in the natural man no latent principle of spiritual life: without a Divine Intercessor, he must ever remain as he is: no good education, or good resolutions, as they are called, will ever make him a good man, except there be a superadded principle from above—a change wrought in him by an Eternal Agent—life put into him by the Spirit of God. He is, however, not so dead, but there is an ability to commit sin; and, therefore, he is said to be *dead in trespasses and sins*: it is a life full of dead acts—a sort of dying life—a living death—a life which is all death.

REV. H. MARTYN.

The Soul not sufficient for its own Happiness.

I MIGHT further add as a *mantissa* to this present argument, the tranquillity and composedness of a good man's spirit in reference to all external molestations. Religion having made a thorough pacification of the soul within itself, renders it impregnable to all outward assaults: so that it is at rest, and lives securely in the midst of all those boisterous storms and tempests which make such violent impressions upon the spirits of wicked men. Here the Stoics have stated the case aright, that all perturbations of the mind arise not properly from an outward but an inward cause: it is not any outward evil but an inward imagination bred in the womb of the soul itself, that molests and grieves it. The more the soul is restored to itself, and lives at the height of its own being, the more easily may it disdain and despise any design or combination against it by the most blustering giants in the world. A Christian that enjoys himself in God, will not be beholden to the world's fair and gentle usage for the composedness of his mind: no; he enjoys that peace and tranquillity within himself which no creature can bestow upon him, or take from him.

But the Stoics were not so happy in their notions about the way to true rest and composedness of spirit. It is not (by their leave) the soul's collecting and gathering up itself within the circumference of its own essence; nor is it a rigid restraining and keeping in its own issues and motions within the confines of its own natural endowments, which is able to confer upon it that *ἀρραξία* and composedness of mind which they so much idolise, as the supreme and only bliss of man, and render it free from all kind of perturbations: for by what we find in Seneca and others, it appears, that the Stoics seeking an autarchy within themselves, and being loath to be beholden to God for their happiness, but that each of them might be as God, self-sufficient and happy in the enjoyment of himself, endeavoured by their sour doctrine and a rigid discipline over their souls, their severities against passions and all those restless motions in the soul after some higher good, to attain a complete *ἀρραξία* and a full contentment within themselves. But

herein the true method of finding rest to themselves escaped them, it being the union of the soul with God, that uniform, simple, and unbounded good, which is the sole original of all true inward peace. Neither were it a happiness worth the having, for a mind, like a hermit sequestered from all things else, by a recession into itself, to spend an eternity in self-converse, and the enjoyment of such a diminutive superficial nothing as itself is, and must necessarily be to itself. It is only peculiar to God to be happy in himself alone; and God who has been more liberal in his provisions for man, hath created in man such a spring of restless motion, that with the greatest impatience forceth him out of himself, and violently tosseth him to and fro, till he come to fix himself upon some solid and self-subsistent goodness. Could a man find himself withdrawn from all terrene and material things, and perfectly retired into himself; were the whole world so quiet and calm about him, as not to offer to make the least attempt upon the composedness and constancy of his mind; might he be so well entertained at his own home, as to find no frowns, no sour looks from his own conscience; might he have that security from heaven, that God would not disquiet his fancied tranquillity by imbittering his thoughts with any dreadful apprehensions; yet he should find something within him that would not let him be at rest, but would rend him from himself, and toss him from his own foundation and consistency. There is an insatiable appetite in the soul of man, like a greedy lion hunting after his prey, that would render him impatient of his own pinching penury, and could never satisfy itself within such a thin and spare diet as he finds at home. There are two principal faculties in the soul which, like the two daughters of the horseleech, are always crying *Give, give*: these are those hungry vultures which, if they cannot find their prey abroad, return and gnaw the soul itself: *where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together*. By this we may see how unavailable to the attaining of true rest and peace that conceit of the Stoics was, who supposed the only way and method hereto was this, to confine the soul thus monastically to its own home. We read in the Gospel of such a question of our Saviour's, *What went you*

out into the wilderness to see? Matt. xi. 7. We may invert it, What do you return within to see? A soul confined within the private and narrow cell of its own particular being? Such a soul deprives itself of all that almighty and essential glory and goodness which shines round about it, which spreads itself through the whole universe: I say it deprives itself of all this, for the enjoying of such a poor, petty, and diminutive thing as itself is, which yet it can never enjoy truly in such a tiredness.

We have seen the peaceful and happy state of the truly religious: but it is otherwise with wicked and irreligious men. *There is no peace to the wicked; but they are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt,* as it is expressed by the prophet Isaiah, lvii. 20, 21. The mind of a wicked man is like the sea when it roars and rages through the striving of several contrary winds upon it. Furious lusts and wild passions within, as they war against heaven and the more noble and divine part of the soul, so they war among themselves, maintaining perpetual contests, and contending which shall be the greatest: *scelera dissident*. These indeed are the Cadmus-brood rising out of the serpent's teeth, ready armed one against another: whence it is that the soul of a wicked man becomes a very uninhabitable and incommodious place to itself, full of disquietness and trouble, through the many contests and civil commotions maintained within it. The minds of wicked men are like those disconsolate and desolate spirits which our Saviour speaks of, which being cast out of their habitation, wander up and down through dry and desert places, *seeking rest but finding none*, Matt. xii. 43. The soul that finds not some solid and self-sufficient good to centre itself upon, is a boisterous and restless thing; and being without God, it wanders up and down in the world, destitute, afflicted, tormented with vehement hunger and thirst after some satisfying good; and, as any one shall bring it tidings, *Lo here, or lo there is good*, it presently goes out towards it, and with a swift and speedy flight hastens after it. The sense of an inward indigency doth stimulate and enforce it to seek its contentment without itself, and so it wanders up and down from one creature to another; and thus

becomes distracted by a multiplicity of objects. And while it cannot find some one and only object upon which, as being perfectly adequate to its capacities, it may wholly bestow itself; while it is tossed with restless and vehement motions of desire and love through a world of painted beauties, false glistening excellencies; courting all, but matching nowhere; violently hurried every where, but finding nowhere *objectum par amori*; while it converseth only with these pinching particularities here below, and is not yet acquainted with the universal goodness; it is certainly far from true rest and satisfaction, from a fixed, composed temper of spirit: but being distracted by multiplicity of objects and ends, there can never be any firm and stable peace or friendship at home amongst all its powers and faculties: nor can there be a firm amity and friendship abroad betwixt wicked men themselves, as Aristotle concludes in his Ethics, because all vice is so multiform and inconsistent a thing, and so there can be no true concatenation of affections and ends between them. Whereas in all good men, virtue and goodness is one form and soul to them all, that unites them together, and there is the one, simple, and uniform good, that guides and governs them all. They are not as a ship tossed in the tumultuous ocean of this world without any compass at all to steer by; but they direct their course by the certain guidance of the one last end, as the true pole-star of all their motion. But while the soul lies benighted in a thick ignorance, as it is with wicked men, and beholds not some stable and eternal good towards which it may move; though it may, by the strength of that principle of activeness within itself spend itself perpetually with swift and giddy motions; yet it will be always contesting with secret disturbances, and cannot act but with many reluctances, as not finding an object equal to the force and strength of its vast affections to act upon.

By what hath been said, may appear the vast difference between the ways of sin and of holiness. Inward distractions and disturbances, *tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil: but to every man that worketh good, glory, honor, and peace*, Rom. ii. 9, 10; inward composedness and tranquillity of spirit, pure and divine joys, far excelling all sen-

sual pleasures; in a word, true contentment of spirit and full satisfaction in God, whom the pious soul loves above all things, and longs still after a nearer enjoyment of him. I shall conclude this particular with what Plotinus concludes

his book, that the life of holy and divine men is 'a life not touched with these vanishing delights of time, but a flight of the soul alone to God alone.'

REV. J. SMITH.

SECTION VII.—THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

Distinction between the Law and the Gospel.

ALL this is closely connected with a subject on which the Reformers constantly insist as of the utmost importance, but the just views of which, they asserted, had long disappeared from the church; namely, the difference between the law and the Gospel—between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. And, though we have learned from them to acknowledge the wide difference between the two, yet it is to be apprehended that, could they return upon earth, they would renew their complaints against many of their professed followers among protestant teachers.—The Law of God requires holiness of heart and life; and the Gospel of Christ requires the same: yea, and there is not a precept of Christ which may not be referred to one or other of the commands of the decalogue: *it* was a summary of *his* injunctions, and *his* injunctions are an expansion of *its* precepts. Where then is the difference of the two?—The Gospel indeed promises pardon and acceptance through faith; but still that faith, it is acknowledged, cannot be separated from obedience—any faith that can be so separated is unavailing: and even the law of the ten commandments speaks of 'mercy' to the obedient. Where then again is the difference of the two?—Let every young divine carefully study these points, and be furnished with distinct answers to these questions, imploring of God by his Holy Spirit to grant him a right understanding of them; for he may be assured that they involve the very essence of the directions to be given to a soul anxiously inquiring the way to salvation—whatever is necessary to its peace, and to its real sanctification and obedience. Here to confound 'things which differ' is to mingle heaven and earth.—But this is done whenever the Gospel is considered as *a mitigated law*,

'The Law,' some would say, 'required perfect, but the Gospel accepts of *sincere* obedience. This is the difference between them.'—Such an answer, it has been justly said, combines the apparently opposite errors, of pharisaism and antinomianism: the former, by teaching men to rely on their own imperfect obedience, and not simply on Christ; the latter, by making the Most Holy to require only what is imperfect—that is to tolerate, or even sanction evil.—This answer shews, therefore, an utter misapprehension of both the law and the Gospel.—'But what,' it may be asked, 'is it not true, that *under* the Gospel persons who render a *sincere*, but yet imperfect obedience, shall be saved? and that those who withhold such obedience shall not be saved?' It is: but the error lies,—and a most essential error it is—in mistaking the *place* to be assigned to Christian obedience, and the *purposes* which it is to answer. It is not to take the place which perfect obedience under the Law, or covenant of works, was to hold: that is, it is in no way or degree to answer the purpose of justifying us, or forming our title to eternal life. That purpose is to be answered by the *obedience unto death* of the Son of God for us, and by that exclusively: and our interest in his merits for our justification is to be attained only by faith in him—*simply receiving* the benefit which is *freely given*.—Then again, though the faith through which we are thus justified must be a 'living faith,' which 'works by love,' and *produces* obedience, yet, considered as achieving our justification, it is not properly said to *include* obedience: the obedience which it produces by no means goes before our justification, to take any part in *procuring* us that blessing, but it 'follows after,' (Church Art. xii.) to *prove* us justified. And in this way only is it that the Gospel admits of '*sincere but imperfect obedience*:' not as a substitute for

the perfect obedience required by the law, (for that the merits of Christ are the real and only substitute,) but for quite another purpose—the purpose only of proving the sincerity of our faith and love—a purpose which it may well answer, though it could never satisfy any law, that the absolute holiness of the Divine Being could suffer him to promulgate. ‘Faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ to justification, and Christ the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection of our works, preserveth us blameless in the sight of God; before whom otherwise the weakness of our faith were cause sufficient to make us culpable—yea, to shut us from the kingdom of heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter.’ (Hooker of Justification, § 31.)

Such, we venture to affirm, are the views of our own articles, homilies, and liturgy, and such those of the Reformers at large. Let us now see how they are exhibited in this important work of Melancthon.*

“Christ has not succeeded to Moses’ place, by propounding a new Law, called the Gospel . . . he only explains the Law already given, because grace cannot be proclaimed without the Law. . . . He preaches the law, because without the law sins cannot be known; and, where sin is not felt, the force and riches of grace cannot be understood. Neither the gospel can be rightly and successfully taught without the law, nor the law without the gospel.”—“But, when you reflect thus, ‘How great

is the misery of mankind, oppressed by sin, by the wrath of God, and by death!’ and when you perceive that the voice of the law is the sentence, the bond, the witness, and the announcer of God’s immense wrath against sin; then always look upon the Son of God standing close at hand: consider his sacrifice, who alone sustained the wrath of God for us, bore the curse of the law, and propitiated the Father to us. Reflect on the benefit conferred by the Son—that it superabounds over sin.”—“The promises of Scripture are twofold. Some are annexed to the law; but they carry with them the condition of fulfilling the law. These fall in with the dictates of natural reason—that God is gracious, but to the innocent and deserving. But those who are conscious that they are unworthy and unholy can hence derive no consolation. The other kind of promises are peculiar to the gospel; and these do not carry with them that condition of having fulfilled the law, as the ground of obtaining the blessing, but propose it freely for Christ’s sake. Such are the promises of the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, or justification, of which the gospel especially treats. If these were suspended on the condition of our fulfilling the law, so that we had to reflect, ‘When I have satisfied the law, then I shall have forgiveness of sins:’ in this case despair must be the consequence. Therefore these blessings are given freely, not for our desert.—Yet some offering, some sacrifice was necessary for us: and for this cause Christ was given, and became our sacrifice, that we might be assured that we are acceptable to God for his sake. . . . Hence St. Paul so urgently presses upon our notice this particle, *gratis, freely*. *It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure*, Rom. iii. 24. iv. 16, &c. This clause, Gratuitously, for Christ’s sake, constitutes the essential difference between the Gospel and the Law. If we do not observe that the promise is gratuitous, doubt overhangs our minds, THE GOSPEL IS TRANSFORMED INTO THE LAW, and affords us no more assurance of forgiveness, or justification, than the law did, or even than natural reason might do. . . . The mind’s eye therefore must be fixed upon this particle, *gratis, freely*. Without this, it will find no sure consolation under genuine alarms of conscience.”

REV. JOHN SCOTT.

* If any should think that in these observations I dwelt more on the obedience of Christ, as performed for our benefit, and not merely on his atoning sufferings, than Melancthon does in the following extracts; I admit that I may have done so; and in doing it I think I am borne out by the Scriptures, as well as by the writings of our church, whose language is, “He for them paid their ransom by his death: He for them fulfilled the law in his life; so that now in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a *fulfiller of the law*.” Yet on the precise way of stating this point I have no controversy with any man, who explicitly disclaims the idea, that, when Christ has once freed us from guilt and condemnation, we are to intitle ourselves to eternal life by our own obedience; and who from first to last ascribes our acceptance, and admission to heaven, to the “merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith only.”—We may add, that Melancthon elsewhere, expressly in answer to the objection that ‘the righteousness of Christ is nowhere in Scripture said to be imputed to us,’ quotes the three texts, Rom. v. 19. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21.—Conail. ii. 140.

The Law and the Gospel contrasted.

LET imagination, therefore, place us for a few minutes at the foot of Sinai, where every man must place himself, who would form an estimate of the salvation wrought for him by Jesus Christ. We shall find the mountain carefully fenced about, and guarded by this awful prohibition: *Charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.—For if so much as a beast touch the mountain, he shall be stoned, or struck through with a dart. Take heed to yourselves therefore; stand at the nether part of the mount*, Exod. xix. 12. 17. 21. There, then, let us take our station, and behold a thick cloud, blackness of darkness, settling upon the mountain, and diffusing itself around; in the midst of this most horrible night, the flame of devouring fire rolling forth in dreadful waves, and burning to the midst of heaven; lightnings every moment issuing from it, and breaking through the surrounding gloom; the air incessantly thundering from every quarter; and, above all, the voice of a trumpet piercing the heavens, sounding long, and waxing louder and louder; the mountain smoking like a furnace, and quaking greatly from its foundations; all the people in the camp trembling and dying for fear: nay, *so terrible was the sight, that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake*, Heb. xii. 21. And if Moses, who, as the figure of him that should come, had the honor to be a mediator between an offended God and his offended people—if he exceedingly feared and quaked at this terrible sight, what must be the state of the careless sinner, who having incurred all this heavy displeasure, nor ever employed an hour in meditating his escape, shall be suddenly called upon by death to meet it all, unprepared? And who is there among us, that thinks himself prepared to meet his God, as he appeared upon Mount Sinai? Let the experiment be made only in an ordinary tempest of thunder and lightning. No sooner is that glorious voice of Jehovah heard in the heavens, but the earth trembles and is still. *Hear attentively*, said Elihu in Job, *the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning to the ends of the earth. At this my heart trembleth, and is moved*

out of his place, Job xxxvii. 1, 2, 3. What sensations then would be produced in the hearts even of the best of men by a manifestation like that at Sinai? And if the righteous scarcely sustain it, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Nor let any man think himself unconcerned in that scene because it is past. The terrors of Mount Sinai are still in force against every one who is not found in Christ Jesus; unless we suppose that the despisers of the gospel will fare better than the contemners of the law, and not rather be thought worthy of much sorer punishment. The hour is coming, when our eyes shall see more amazing sights, and our ears shall hear more terrifying sounds, than were seen and heard by the house of Israel in the wilderness. For yet a little while, and the same God who was revealed from heaven in flaming fire to give the law, shall again be revealed from heaven in flaming fire to inquire how it hath been observed, and to take vengeance on those who have not secured unto themselves a sponsor to stand in the gap for them. So that although the things seen and heard at Mount Sinai did not affect us, yet the argument enlarged upon by the apostle, Heb. xii. undoubtedly doth; namely, that if the law was so terrible when enacted, how much more terrible must it be, when required at our hands by God, coming in glorious majesty to judge the world! Then shall there be blackness of darkness, not for a time, but for ever; then shall the lightnings of Sinai be extended over all the earth, and a fire be kindled which shall not be quenched; then shall the heavens pass away with the noise of a great and intolerable thunder; a far louder trumpet shall then not only pierce the ears of the living, but also sound an alarm through all the regions of the grave, and awaken those who shall have slept for ages in the dust; then he whose voice formerly shook the earth shall fulfil his promise, *Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven*, Heb. xii. 26; both of which shall be removed, and their place no more be found: then shall all the tribes of the earth, as well as those of Israel, tremble, and mourn, and wail; and who, where is he, that thinketh he shall not then find cause to say with Moses, *So terrible is the sight, that I exceedingly fear and quake?*

Such, therefore, is the wrath which the

law worketh, and such is the condemnation of that 'hand-writing against us,' from which our dear Master and Redeemer, as at this time, the time of his circumcision, engaged to rescue all who should believe in him. Then it was, that he took upon himself the law, and the penalty annexed to the breach of it, *being*, as an apostle has expressed it, *made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law*, Gal. iii. 13; that is, to deliver us from the black darkness of sin and death; from the thunders and lightnings of the Father's vengeance; from the dread of the trumpet of eternal judgment; the dissolution and destruction of the world; the words of condemnation, and the unextinguishable flame; and having delivered us from all these terrors, to introduce us to a far different scene of things; to the light of righteousness and immortality; to the peace and love of God; to the still small voice of evangelical grace; to the harps of angels, and the music of hallelujahs; to the final sentence of absolution, *Come, ye blessed*; to a kingdom that cannot be moved; to the joys of heaven, and the glories of eternity. *For we are not come unto the mount that might be touched* (the palpable, material mount), *that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, (for they could not endure that which was commanded; and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake).* But we are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 18, &c.; the one crying as loud for mercy as the other did for vengeance. And therefore, when this blood of sprinkling was first shed, *when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel, before he was*

conceived in the womb, saying, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*, Matt. i. 21.

BP. HORNE.

Harmony between the Law and the Gospel.

I SHALL conclude the doctrinal part of this discourse, by pointing out, in a few words, the harmony and agreement between them; for although there be all these differences between the Law and the Gospel, yet there is no feud between them. They sweetly stand together in their proper place; the law is not against the gospel, nor the gospel against the law; no, there is a pleasant harmony, which will appear, if we consider, that by the gospel the law reaches its end; *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*. In the gospel we see the law fulfilled as a covenant, and settled as a rule of obedience. I say, it is fulfilled as a covenant by the righteousness revealed in the gospel; yea, not only fulfilled, but *magnified and made honorable*, a new and superadded glory reflected upon it by Christ, the Son of God, his being *made under the law, to redeem us who were under the law*. And then by the gospel it is also settled as a rule of obedience; *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law*, Rom. iii. 31. The gospel brings to light new motives and arguments to obedience, which the law itself, abstractly considered, could never afford, namely, arguments drawn from the consideration of redeeming grace and love, which have a more constraining power to obedience with an ingenuous spirit, than all the curses and penalties that the law denounces against those who do not continue in obedience thereto.

Again, the harmony of the Law and Gospel appears in this, that the law paves the way to the entertainment of gospel grace; for it is a *schoolmaster to lead us unto Christ, that we may be justified by faith*. The law is a lance in the hand of the surgeon to open the ulcer of sin and corruption within us; the gospel, as a medicinal balsam, drains and gradually heals it, when applied in a way of believing: the law is a plough to till up the fallow ground of the heart of man; the gospel is the good seed cast into the furrows, which being impregnated by the dew of heaven, makes it spring up to everlasting

life: the law is as a hammer to break the rock in pieces; the gospel dissolves it with the warm fire of the *love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost*. Thus the law is subservient to the great design of the gospel.

Again, what the Law teaches preceptively, the Gospel teaches effectively; the law enjoins the duty, the gospel furnishes with grace to obey it; there is no duty the law requires, but there is suitable furniture in the gospel promise to discharge it. Doth the law require us to *know the Lord*, which is the first precept in the moral law? Well, here is suitable grace provided in the Gospel; *I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord*. Doth the law require us to *trust in him at all times*? Well, the gospel promise is suited unto this; *They shall trust in the name of the Lord*, Zeph. iii. 12. Doth it require of us to *love the Lord our God with all the heart, soul, strength, and mind*? Here is gospel grace to effect it; *I will circumcise their hearts to love the Lord their God*. Doth it crave obedience, saying, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*? Well, the grace of the gospel says, *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them*. Doth the law enjoin us to *sanctify the Lord in our hearts, and make him our fear and our dread*? The grace of the promise exactly suits that; *I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me*. Doth the law require us to *call on the name of the Lord, to worship and serve him*? The gospel promises that *the spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured out to help our infirmities, and to teach us to pray, and praise, and perform other acts of worship*. Does the law enjoin us to repent and turn from the evil of our ways? The gospel promises the *heart of flesh* in place of the *heart of stone*; and tells us that *God sent his Son to bless us, in turning away every one of us from our iniquities*. Thus you see that what the law teaches preceptively, the gospel teaches effectively.

Again, I might tell you, that the harmony between the Law and the Gospel appears in this, that the law discovers the sinner's duty, and the gospel discovers the object of duty; the law enjoins faith, the gospel lifts up Christ the object of faith: *As Moses lifted up the serpent in*

the wilderness, even so is the Son of man lifted up, viz. upon the gospel pole; *that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life*. The law enjoins the sinner to love God with all the heart; but it is the gospel only that presents God in such a view, as to become an object of love to a guilty sinner; namely, as he is a reconciled God and Father in Christ; for viewing God absolutely, as he is presented in the glass of the holy law, he is an object of terror instead of love. The law enjoins us to turn from sin under the pain of eternal wrath and vengeance; the gospel shows the sinner a refuge unto which he is to turn; *Turn ye to your strong hold, ye prisoners of hope*. The law enjoins mourning for sin; *Rend your hearts and not your garments*; the gospel presents a crucified Christ, *wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities*, whom when the sinner views by faith, he mourns, *as one doth for an only son, and is in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for a first-born*. The law requires us to worship the Lord our God; the gospel discovers both the object and the way of worship; I say, the gospel discovers the object of worship, namely, a God in Christ, and the way to the holiest opened by the blood of Jesus.

To conclude; the Law by its terror sweeps away the refuge of lies; the Gospel discovers a new foundation of hope and help, saying, *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; and he that believeth on him, shall not be confounded*. The law saps the foundation of sand, and overturns the tower that the sinner was building in order to reach heaven by it; the gospel discovers the Rock of Ages upon which the sinner may build his house, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. The law, when viewed spiritually, drives the sinner out of himself, by discovering his emptiness, poverty, and misery; the gospel draws and invites him out of himself, by discovering the allfulness of a Redeemer to supply his wants, though never so great. The law lets the man see that he has no money nor price; the gospel shows, that though he has no money nor price, yet he may come and buy *gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eye-salve*. The law lets the sinner see that he is shut up in a pit, wherein there is no water; the gospel shows how

the sinner, by the blood of God's covenant, may come forth out of the pit, and opens a *fountain of living water*, where he may *draw and drink with joy*. The law leads us to Christ for righteousness; the gospel sends us to the law as a rule of obedience, *as a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths*. Thus the whole life and work of a Christian is a continual traffic from the law to the gospel, and from the gospel back again to the law as a rule. So much then shall serve for clearing the harmony and agreement betwixt the Law and the Gospel.

REV. EBEN. ERSKINE.

The Covenant at Sinai.

THE covenant made with Israel at Mount Sinai was not formally the covenant of works, 1st. Because that cannot be renewed with the sinner, in such a sense as to say, If, for the future, thou shalt perfectly perform every instance of obedience, thou shalt be justified by that, according to the covenant of works. For, by this, the pardon of former sins would be presupposed, which the covenant of works excludes. 2dly. Because God did not require perfect obedience from Israel, as a condition of this covenant, as a clause of claiming the reward; but sincere obedience, as an evidence of reverence and gratitude. 3dly. Because it did not conclude Israel under the curse, in the sense peculiar to the covenant of works, where all hope of pardon was cut off, if they sinned but in the least instance.

However the carnal Israelites, not adverting to God's purpose or intention, as they ought, mistook the true meaning of that covenant, embraced it as a covenant of works, and by it sought for righteousness. Paul declares this; *but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness; wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone*, Rom. ix. 31, 32. To the same purpose it is, that, Gal. iv. 24, 25, he compares to the Ishmaelites the Israelites, while they tarried in the deserts of Arabia, which was the country of the former, who are born to bondage of their mother Hagar, or the covenant of Mount Sinai, and being destitute of true righteousness, shall, with Ishmael, be at length turned out of the house of their heavenly

Father. For, in that place, Paul does not consider the covenant of Mount Sinai as in itself, and in the intention of God, offered to the elect, but as abused by carnal and hypocritical men. Let Calvin again speak: 'The Apostle declares, that, by the children of Sinai, he meant hypocrites, persons who are at length cast out of the Church of God, and disinherited. What therefore is that generation unto bondage, which he there speaks of? It is doubtless those who basely abuse the law, and conceive nothing concerning it but what is servile. The pious fathers who lived under the Old Testament did not so. For, the servile generation of the law did not hinder them from having the spiritual Jerusalem for their mother. But they, who stick to the bare Law, and acknowledge not its pedagogy, by which they are brought to Christ, but rather make it an obstacle to their coming to him, these are Ishmaelites (for thus, and I think rightly, Morlorat reads) born unto bondage.' The design of the apostle, therefore, in that place, is not to teach us, that the covenant of Mount Sinai was nothing but a covenant of works, altogether opposite to the gospel covenant; but only that the gross Israelites misunderstood the mind of God, and basely abused his covenant; as all such do, who seek for righteousness by the law. See again Calvin on Rom. x. 4.

Nor was it formally a covenant of grace: because that requires not only obedience, but also promises, and bestows strength to obey. For, thus the covenant of grace is made known, *and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever*, Jer. xxxii. 39. But such a promise appears not in the covenant made at Mount Sinai. Nay; God, on this very account, distinguishes the new covenant of grace from the Sinaitic, Jer. xxxi. 31—33. And Moses loudly proclaims, *yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day*, Deut. xxix. 4. Certainly, the chosen from among Israel had obtained this. Yet not in virtue of this covenant, which stipulated obedience, but gave no power for it: but in virtue of the covenant of grace, which also belonged to them.

What was it then? It was a *national covenant* between God and Israel, whereby Israel promised to God a sincere obedience to all his precepts, especially to the ten words; God, on the other hand, pro-

mised to Israel, that such an observance would be acceptable to him, nor want its reward, both in this life and in that which is to come, both as to soul and body. This reciprocal promise supposed a covenant of grace. For, without the assistance of the covenant of grace, man cannot sincerely promise that observance; and yet that an imperfect observance should be acceptable to God is wholly owing to the covenant of grace. It also supposed the doctrine of the covenant of works, the terror of which being increased by those tremendous signs that attended it, they ought to have been excited to embrace that covenant of God. This agreement therefore is a consequent both of the covenant of grace and of works; but was formally neither the one nor the other. A like agreement and renewal of the covenant between God and the pious is frequent; both national and individual. Of the former see Josh. xxiv. 22. 2 Chron. xv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. Neh. x. 29. Of the latter, Psal. cxix. 106. It is certain, that in the passages we have named, mention is made of some covenant between God and his people. If any one should ask me, of what kind, whether of works or of grace? I shall answer, it is formally neither; but a covenant of sincere piety, which supposes both. WITSIUS.

Uses of the Law.

THE state of man, to which the Law has its peculiar relations, is threefold: viz. his *first*, his *fallen*, and his *restored* state. In his *first* state, it was to man, first the rule of his nature and of all his actions, to which he willingly, and with the greatest complacency of soul conformed himself. 2dly, The most excellent beautiful ornament of man, as stamped and impressed by the creating hand of God on his mind. 3dly, The condition of the covenant of works, which man himself was to perform in order to obtain consummate bliss and happiness.

In his *fallen state* it serves, 1st, To discover and convince man of his sin, *by the law is the knowledge of sin*, Rom. iii. 20. And the precepts of the law do this two ways. *First*, as in a mirror, they discover to man the vileness both of his life and actions, James i. 23. *Then* by its irritating virtue, whereby, on account of human depravity, they stir up sin, which otherwise lay dormant; so that, like one galled by a bridle, the more strictly sin is prohibited

and restrained, the more vehemently it resists and makes opposition, every thing that would keep it under being offensive to it. The apostle excellently illustrates this, Rom. vii. 7. 13. 2dly, To denounce the curse against man; which it does by its comminations: *now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*, Rom. iii. 19. 3dly, To be a restraint upon men, and bring them to some external honest deportment, in order to preserve civil government, and prevent the destruction of mankind by adulteries, rapines, oppressions, and the like heinous crimes. The apostle seems particularly to intimate this office of the law, when he says, *that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners*, &c. 1 Tim. i. 9. For, he shews, that it is a curb to those prevailing lusts of the flesh, which otherwise would be immoderately extravagant. 4thly, To bring sinners to Christ: *for, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. *The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*, Gal. iii. 24. This is not only true of the ceremonial, but also of the law of the decalogue, which brings to Christ these two ways: first, as it really keeps an elect person, while in an unconverted state, in some measure, in the way of his duty, that he may not obstinately neglect all concern for righteousness and his soul. For, where the Spirit of God does not yet bear rule, sinful lusts break forth there, in such a manner, that the soul, which is obnoxious to them, is in danger of sinking into forgetfulness and contempt of God. And they would actually do this, did not the Lord put a bar thereto by this remedy of his law. But principally the law brings to Christ, as it strips man of all confidence in his own goodness and righteousness, and, by an acknowledgment of his misery, deeply humbles him, that so he may be thus prepared to endeavour after, what before he thought he did not stand in need of.

In the state of *restoration* it teacheth believers: 1st, How perfect the obedience was, which Christ performed for them, and how much they are under obligations to him, since he, who was Lord of the law, subjected himself to it for them, not only to obey its precepts, but to endure the

curse, that he might redeem them from the law, Gal. iv. 4, 5. 2dly, At what distance they still are from that perfection of holiness which the law requires, in order the better to bring them to humility, and to a denial of all self-righteousness, Phil. iii. 8, 9, and a longing after a blessed perfection, Rom. vii. 24. 3dly, What is the rule of their gratitude, and the mark at which they ought to aim, Phil. iii. 12. 1 Tim. i. 5. 4thly, and lastly, It bears witness to, approves and commends, the beginnings of sanctification, and comforts those as being true Israelites, who *delight in the law of God after the inward man*. The law does this, not from its own authority, which can admit of nothing but what is perfectly holy, and condemns every thing that is stained but with the least spot; but from the authority of the grace of Christ, to whom it is now subservient, and at whose command it commends even the imperfect works of believers, declares them to be sincere, and so far approves of them as conformable to itself: and in that sense the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those *who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 7.

WITSIUS.

God's Law requireth nothing of us, but that which was in our nature before the fall, which we see is impossible for us to pay accordingly; and yet God, not unjust in that he asketh of us nothing thereby, but the self same thing which he gave us in our creation. The Law then, and the precepts of God were given after the fall of man, not that man should thereby get life and the thing which was lost by sin, (for the blessed Seed was promised for the recovering hereof and to him that pertained,) but that man by it might know sin, and what he had lost, thereby to desire more deeply the promised Seed, by whom as we be received, so our evils be not imputed, and that we being renewed by his Holy Spirit and new seed, should as newborn babes desire, and by will begin to do the Law of God, which after our deliverance forth of this corrupt body, and man of sin, by death, we shall without all let fully accomplish, and at the length receive the body to be spiritual (as Paul saith) and holy, ready to obey and serve the Spirit, as a helper, rather than a hinderer. Oh! happy day, when wilt thou appear!

I would have the end wherefore God

gave his Law to be considered, namely, not for man to get thereby eternal life, which appertained to the promised Seed; but to shew man what sin is, and what by sin he lost, that he might by his inability be driven to desire of very necessity the promised Messias, and so by him to receive the Spirit; where through being regenerate, he might learn to love the Law, to take it as a directory and rule to live by, and to hedge in his old man from controlling. JOHN BRADFORD. (MARTYR.)

The Christian feels the advantage of the law too well, to be willing, with the Antinomian, to cast it off, because it has lost its justifying power. For what an enlarged view does he gain even from its *covenant form* of the necessity, character, and excellency of the Gospel! The intervention of a Surety, a Redeemer, and an atonement, was the effect of Divine determination to *magnify the Law, and make it honorable*, Isaiah xlii. 21; that God might honorably pardon, justify, and save, those who had transgressed its sanctions. Without therefore a view of the excellency of the law, both in its precept and its penalty, no sufficient reason appears for the sufferings and death of Immanuel. Thus *the glory of the Ministration of condemnation* commends the exceeding glory of *the Ministration of life and righteousness*, 2 Cor. iii. 7-9. The same glass exhibits to us *indirectly* what the Gospel shows us in *direct terms*—our infinite obligation to the love of Christ for what he has become, done, and suffered in our place. The greatness of his astonishing condescension is our constraining bond to his service, whose obedience has answered all the demands and suffered all the penalties standing against us, and *brought in everlasting righteousness* as our ground of acceptance before God.

REV. C. BRIDGES.

The Law as a Rule of Life.

SOME little difficulty has been introduced into this subject by refiners in Christianity, who, under the idea of magnifying the grace of God, seem desirous of excluding the very word Law from the Christian vocabulary, though *the law* in every respect is *good, if a man use it lawfully*. Hence a dispute has arisen, whether, in speaking of the rule of a believer's life, we must refer it to that which is properly

called the Law of God, or the Moral Law of Ten Commandments, delivered by Moses, or to the preceptive parts of the Gospel, or to the example of Christ, or to the whole word of God. The objection to the term Law has no doubt originated from always retaining, with the term, the idea of a covenant, connected with promises of life to obedience, and the threatening of death to every transgression. This, we have before observed, is not necessary; nor is it the most usual or exact Scriptural idea of the term, which more frequently implies simply a rule and directory. It is agreed on all hands, that the Law is no longer the covenant of life, upon which we are to stand for acceptance before God; that all legal motives and claims of merit are entirely done away. But, when the love of God is implanted in the heart of a justified, accepted, and believing sinner, the question must arise, How shall this love discover itself in a way which is pleasing to God? What is the *external rule* by which this *internal principle* must be regulated? Where is the direction which God has given us for this purpose? I see no safer, nor plainer way of answering the question, than that which has been common in the church of God from the beginning, to reply, that *the law of God is the rule of a believer's conduct*. In doing this we follow the footsteps of the flock, the example of the wisest and the best believers in the church of Christ. Indeed in this view, considering the law as divested of its covenant form, and alluding only to its directive precept, there appears to be no difference in this various application. For what is the example of Christ, but the perfect fulfilment, the living copy, of the law? What are the preceptive parts of the gospel, but the law evangelised; the gospel view of the same duties, which as to matter and form the law prescribes? What is the whole word of God, but the law amplified and explained? At least it must contain it as a part of that whole. And what is the Moral Law, but the epitome of that whole word? Since, then, we are not speaking of the ground and motive of obedience, it is evident, that the substance, the form, and the rule, of duty to a creature, must always be the same: If we were to compare, distinctly, every commandment of the law, with the declarations of the New Testament, we should discern that every

precept is there delivered again in an evangelical form, and sometimes even in the same words, and enforced by the same considerations: witness the five commandments in Eph. vi. 1-3. If we consider also the precepts of the Gospel, we shall perceive that they are included either in the letter, or at least in the spirit, of the Ten Commandments of the Moral Law. The apostles, therefore, seem to have been ignorant of these nice distinctions; for, if the Gospel precepts can be proved to be in substance the same as the Law of the Ten Commandments, and that it is there again delivered and enforced, though not in the exact form, it is surely most absurd to make it a matter of controversy, whether we shall read our rule of duty in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, in the Old Testament, or in the Gospels and Epistles in the New. It is surely as much a *vain jangling* about the law, as that which the apostle condemns; the guilt of which must rest upon those who have introduced the troublesome novelty.

Whenever, therefore, this view of the Law as the rule of life, gives distress to the mind, as it is said by such to do, or introduces legal fears to the dishonor of Christ, and the destruction of the believer's peace, it arises from secretly reverting to it as the covenant of life, and considering our obedience to it as the ground of our acceptance with God; though such fears may sometimes arise from a consciousness of general insincerity in the Christian profession, in which case they ought rather to be cherished till they have wrought a due conviction of guilt, and brought us penitent and believing to the Lord Jesus Christ, than to be checked as improper and needless. But if these fears arise from the consideration of the Law as a rule of conduct, it must be from misrepresentation: the same fears would arise from the establishment of any rule, to those that remain ignorant, through the self-righteous spirit of the natural heart. The example of Christ, or the Gospel precept, would have the very same effect as the commandment of the Law: yet no one will venture to affirm, that the believer is without rule. *Not without law to God*, says the apostle, *but under the Law to Christ*. The Law, it is allowed, can do nothing for us, as to quickening the mind to obedience; nor, indeed, can the Gospel precept, as it is an

outwardly written commandment. The apostle styles it, equally as the Law, *the killing letter*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. We must not, however, confound the inward efficacy with the outward direction, the vital principle with that which guides its exercises in the outward conduct.

REV. W. GOODE.

Distinction between the Law as a Covenant of Works, and the Law as a Rule of Life.

THE LAW may be considered either as a *Rule*, or as a *Covenant*. Christ hath freed all believers from the *rigour* and *curse* of the Law, considered *as a covenant*; but he hath not freed them from *obedience* to the Law, considered *as a rule*. And all those Scriptures that speak of the Law as if it were abrogated or annulled, take it considered *as a covenant*; those again that speak of the Law as if it were still in force, take it considered *as a rule*. The Law as a covenant, is *rigorous*; and under that rigour we now are not, if we be in Christ: but the Law as a rule is equal; and under that equity we still are, though we be in Christ.

The Law as a *rule* only sheweth us, what is good and evil, what we are to do, and not to do. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee*; Mic. vi. 8. without any condition annexed either of *reward* if we observe it, or of *punishment* if we transgress it. But the Law, as a *covenant*, exacteth punctual and personal performance of every thing that is contained therein, with a *condition* annexed of God's *acceptance*, and of *blessing*, if we perform it to the full; but of his *wrath* and *curse* upon us, if we fail in any thing. Now by reason of transgression, we having broken all that covenant, the Law hath his work upon us, and involveth us all in the *curse*: Gal. iii. 10. so as by *the covenant of the Law*, vers. 11. no flesh living can be justified. Then cometh in Christ: who subjecting himself for our sakes to *the covenant of the Law*, first fulfilleth it in his own Person, but in our behalf, as our surety; and then disannulleth it, and instead thereof establisheth a *better covenant* Heb. viii. 6. for us, even *the Covenant of Grace*. So that now as many as believe, are free from the covenant of the Law, and from the curse of the Law; and set under a covenant of grace, and under

promises of grace. There is a translation then of the covenant: but what is all this to the rule? That is still where it was, even as the nature of good and evil is still the same it was; and the Law, considered as a rule, can no more be abolished or changed, than can the nature of good and evil be abolished or changed. It is our singular comfort then, and the happiest fruit of our *Christian liberty*, that we are freed by Christ, and through faith in him, from the covenant and curse of the Law: but we must know that it is our duty, notwithstanding the liberty that we have in Christ, to frame our lives and conversations according to the rule of the Law. Which if we shall neglect under the pretence of our Christian liberty; we must answer for both: both for neglecting our duty, and for abusing our liberty.

BR. SANDERSON.

Necessity of preaching the Law.

THIS shows the ignorance and absurdity of those men, who cry down preaching of the law, as a course leading to despair and discontentment, though we find by St. Paul, that it leadeth to Christ. To preach the law alone by itself, we confess, is to pervert the use of it; neither have we any power or commission so to do, for we have *our power for edification, and not for destruction*. It was published as an appendant to the Gospel, and so must it be preached. It was published in *the hand of a Mediator*, and must be preached in the hand of a Mediator. It was published *evangelically*, and it must be so preached. But yet we must preach the law, and that in its own fearful shapes; for, though it was published in mercy, it was published in thunder, fire, tempests, and darkness, even in the hand of a Mediator; for this is the method of the Holy Ghost, to convince first of sin, and then to reveal righteousness and refuge in Christ. The law is the forerunner, that makes room and prepares welcome in the soul for Christ.

BR. REYNOLDS.

We can have no Scriptural Hopes without the Knowledge of the Law.

I COME now to show, that without the knowledge of the Law we can have *no Scriptural hopes*. The *faith* which alone justifies the soul, is that which brings us simply to the Lord Jesus Christ as our only hope and refuge. If we attempt, in

any measure or degree, to blend with his merits any thing of our own, we make void all that he has done and suffered for us : *Christ himself is from that moment becomes of no effect unto us.* As far as respects us, *his death is in vain.* But who will exercise this faith ? Who will condescend to accept salvation on such terms ? Who will bear to renounce his good works in point of dependence on them, and to enter into heaven at the same gate with publicans and harlots ? All this is too humiliating for our proud hearts : we will not endure it ; we will have something of our own, whereof to boast. If we make not our own works the sole ground of our justification, we will rely on them in part : or, if we be brought to rely solely on the merits of Christ, and to seek salvation by faith alone, we will make our own goodness a warrant for believing in him. We cannot, we will not, suffer ourselves to be stript of all self-preference : we will not glory solely in the cross of Christ. And wherefore is all this reluctance to comply with the terms of the Gospel ? It proceeds from our ignorance of the law. We see not, that our very best deeds stand in need of mercy, as much as our vilest sins. We see not, that the smallest defect entails a curse upon us, as truly as our most enormous transgression. When these things are clearly seen, all the difficulty vanishes ; and we are contented to be saved altogether by grace. But till we have obtained this knowledge of the law, nothing under heaven can prevail upon us to exercise faith with becoming simplicity.

As to an entire devotedness of heart to God, as his redeemed people, we shall be equally defective in that also. We shall be contented with a low standard of obedience, and never aspire after a perfect conformity to the divine image. *To walk altogether as Christ walked,* will appear a bondage. To tread in the steps of the holy apostles, will be regarded as being *righteous over-much.* To glory in the cross for Christ's sake, and to rejoice that *we are counted worthy to suffer shame and death* for him, will be thought fit only for apostles, and a culpable excess in us. *But nothing less than this will prove us sincere : nothing less than this will be an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord.* If we would be really Christ's, we must *live not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again ; purifying ourselves, even as he is pure ; and being perfect, even*

as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. This, let it be remembered, is inseparable from a Scriptural hope : and, inasmuch as nothing but a Scriptural hope can constrain us to it, and nothing but the grace of Christ effect it in us, we must remain destitute of it : our ignorance of the law will keep us from Christ ; and our want of union with Christ will keep us far lower in our attainments than the Gospel requires, and, consequently, destitute of the hope which the Gospel only can inspire.

REV. C. SIMMONS.

We shall all be of one Mind regarding the Law and the Gospel in the next World.

LABOR for such thoughts of the law of God, and of the righteousness of Christ, and of the grace of God, as you will have when you come to die. Dying thoughts are commonly the truest. When a man is launching into eternity, when the man hath, as it were, put one foot off from the shore of time, and is leaving this world—what a poor mean thing is this little cottage of self-righteousness ? It is as nothing in the man's eyes ; but that great palace of the righteousness of Christ, and the great tenor of free grace, in bestowing it on the unworthy—what a glorious thing doth it appear to be ? Dying people do not use to brag of their lives, and their great attainments : *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,* saith dying Stephen, Acts vii. 59. *Although my house be not so with God,* saith dying David, *yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure : this is all my salvation, and all my desire,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Labor to have such thoughts of these things as all men will have, both good and bad, at the great day of judgment. The world will once be all of a mind, that is questionless ; in the main things all believers are of one mind now ; and in the main things all unbelievers are in one mind ; and unbelievers reckon Christ crucified weakness and foolishness : and all believers reckon him the wisdom and the power of God : but when the last day comes, they will be all of one mind exactly, they on the right hand, and they on the left hand too. If this question were to go round to all the miserable assembly at the Judge's left hand, What think you of the law of God ? — ' Oh ! it is a holy, powerful, dreadful law,' would they say. ' We lie under it for evermore, and feel the lashes of it.' What think you of the righteousness of

Christ? 'It is a safe garment, happy they that are clothed with it; we have refused it, and therefore we are destroyed.' The despised grace of God is there precious to them: we use to say, 'Truth is the daughter of time:' if I may reflect upon the words, 'Truth is the daughter of eternity;' and this day of eternity will bring forth truth to all men, as to these three points:—the holiness of the law of God—the virtue of the righteousness of Christ—and, the dominion of the grace of God. These are points that all the damned in hell, and all the glorified in heaven, will eternally have the same sentiments of; but with wonderful difference as to their share therein. The damned hear nothing but the curse of the law: but it is the happiness of the glorified in being delivered from it. *That as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. v. 21. The words just going before are, *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*, ver. 20. There are two great things that have filled this world:—there were but two men in it that are worth talking of—the first Adam and the second; and if you know these well, it is no great matter what you are ignorant of. The first Adam is the law; the second Adam is the Gospel: to the former belongs hell; and to the latter heaven. Now, these two great men brought in two great things:—the first man brought in that woful thing we call sin; and the second man brought in that brave thing we call grace; and both these are great principles: sin reigns, and all that it reigns over, it destroys; it reigns unto death: and grace reigns, and all it reigns over, it saves; *Grace reigns unto eternal life, through righteousness, by Jesus Christ our Lord*.

REV. R. TRAILL.

The Law not lowered in its demands in consequence of Man's Depravity.

SOME suppose the difficulty would be removed if it might be allowed that Christ by his death procured or engaged the Father's love to sinners, so far as to obtain a *relaxation* of that law under which they originally were, and establish a milder system of government suited to the condition of his rebellious subjects. But this plea is quite inadmissible, because the love of God, from which salvation springs, was

the *cause* of Christ's coming to die for transgressors. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John iii. 16. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, that God sent his Son into the world that we might live through him*, John iv. 9. *Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us*, chap. iii. 16. Christ did not procure a new remedial law, because that law under which sinners *are*, requires perfect obedience, on pain of perpetual punishment. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, and as many as are of the works of the law are under its curse*, Gal. iii. 10. The law under which sinners are, is that according to which the world stands condemned as criminal at Jehovah's bar, and *by the deeds of which no flesh shall be justified in his sight*, Rom. iii. 19, 20. Those who think a relaxation of the law is obtained, ought to point out wherein the *abatement* consisteth, that men might keep in a happy medium, and not presume to go *beyond* nor *fall short* in obedience to its precepts. Will the Lord indeed allow men to have other gods besides himself, or to worship him in a way contrary to what he has appointed? Will he hold them guiltless that take his name in vain? May people now lawfully forget to keep holy the Sabbath day? Has Christ released men from their natural obligations to parents? or given them a license to murder, to live in uncleanness, and falsely to accuse their neighbors, or covet what is the property of others? If moral commands continue in full force, as is abundantly evident from the New Testament, wherein then does the alteration consist? Does the law cease to take cognisance of the heart, and being *less spiritual*, is it therefore *more agreeable* to the carnal mind? If that be the case, how can *mental* acts be condemned by it? which the Scriptures *positively* declare they are. Impure desires are by it deemed adultery: hatred, murder; and covetousness, idolatry; see Matt. v. 28; 2 Pet. ii. 14; 1 John iii. 15; Col. iii. 5: The language of Christians in the apostolic day was, *We know the law is spiritual*, Rom. vii. 14. *It is holy, just, and good*, verse 12. *I delight in it after the inward man*, says Paul, verse 22. *So then with my mind I serve the law of God*, verse 25. The Law of which the apostle spoke, and in which

he delighted, was that which slew him; that commandment which was ordained to life, (but as a criminal,) he found to be unto death; verse 10, 11. He was delivered from it as a covenant, but under it as an unalterable law, verse 6, 7; as a covenant it became weak (that it could not give life to the sinner); not weak in its own nature, much less wicked, but weak through the flesh. What it could not therefore do in favor of the guilty, was done by Jesus, who did not blame the Law, but justified and satisfied its demands, and condemned all opposition to it, even *sin in the flesh* Rom. viii. 3. The law under which Christians are, requires truth in the inward parts as much as ever, and cannot alter whilst Jehovah remains the same: for *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth*, John ii. 24. If then both the *matter* and *spiritual nature* of moral obedience remain the same, notwithstanding man's inability, it is evident the law by which obedience is enforced is not *altered*, and that a new remedial law is a *fiction*. Besides, if the law became unrighteous when its subjects became ungodly, (which would be blasphemy to suppose,) God would certainly have repealed it, and not sent his Son to honor an unjust law, at the expense of his blood. Finally, If the divine law ceaseth to require perfect obedience, saints will at last rise in obedience superior to the law under which they are; for *the spirits of just men will be made perfect*, and when so, they will love God more than he desires they should, unless the Law *rise* and *fall* in its requirements according to the *inclinations* of its subjects, on which absurd hypothesis the notion of a new Law seems to be founded. The Gospel exhibits *new motives* to love and obedience, and graciously conveys *new principles*, in consequence of which saints yield to God *new obedience*, and by his authority attend to *new positive ordinances*, for new and special purposes; and are accepted of God, and approach him under *new characters*, in a *new and living way*; and are encouraged by *new and better* promises, in consequence of the *new and well-ordered covenant* of grace, under which they are. But though he make *all things new* in respect of acceptance with him, and enjoyment of him, and *old things* pass away in favor of them who inhabit the new Jerusalem, yet as

God is the same, without variableness, in his own adorable perfections, infinite beauty, and boundless authority, he cannot therefore alter his moral law, considered simply as a law, without giving up his claim to Deity, because moral obligations arise from that natural connexion and relation subsisting between God and rational creatures, considered as the productions of his power. Hence it is that no alteration in them can possibly diminish their obligations to him.

REV. R. HALL.

There has not, for these thousand years, been started a more mischievous, pestilential notion, than that God does not demand a perfect fulfilling of all his laws. This is directly to contradict Jesus Christ. God never alters his perfect law; though he pardons us when we break it. Observe, however, he does not pardon those who are asleep, but those who labor, those who fear, and who say with Job, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*. Never suppose that God does not require an exact regard to every tittle of his law; such a notion will soon engender pride, and make you despise that grace, through which his holy law, as a schoolmaster, should compel you to seek deliverance.

LUTHER.

The true *Gospel doctrines* are always according to *godliness*, or the real Gospel promotes vital holiness in the souls of men to the very uttermost. No principle can come from God, which gives the least countenance to sin, or favors lust in the soul; or which supposes, that a *lower* degree of obedience is required of us now, because of our incapacity to yield a perfect and sinless obedience through our deep and horrid depravity which is within us.

To accommodate the law to our present weakness in its precepts, is the worst kind (Dr. Owen) of antinomianism; and to affirm, that we are not under the law, as a rule of action, is downright rebellion and insolence against God: it is such abandoned and scandalous licentiousness as ought to be abhorred by every true believer in the church of God. To suppose we are not under the law, as a rule of *action* to Christ our King, and a rule of *gratitude* to Christ our Redeemer; I say, such a supposition necessarily implies,

that no acts are unlawful, or sinful; for, *where no law is, there is no transgression*. We are not freed from the law, as a rule of conduct, nor is any abatement made in its preceptive part; no, not in the least. Neither does the Divine Lawgiver make any allowances for our defects or imperfections, and what are sometimes called our unallowed and involuntary sins. Nor does he *justify* our persons on the ground of a *partial obedience* to his just and holy law. This would be to conceal, or deny, or misrepresent the true character of God, and be an everlasting dishonor to his justice, holiness, majesty, and eternal dominion over all.

We ought, therefore, strictly to examine every doctrine by this rule; and not, for one moment, advance any principle in religion, which is inconsistent with the purity, perfection, and extensive commands of the law. For God cannot abate; he never will abate of the strictness of his precepts, in order to save sinners; nor will he ever justify their persons without a *righteousness*, a divine and infinite *righteousness*, which is absolutely and eternally answerable to his precepts, in their utmost purity and extent. As we must not dare to corrupt the glorious doctrines of the Gospel; so we must and will resolutely maintain the doctrine of the law in its purity, perfection, and dignity, whilst life, and thought, and immortality endure.

DR. RYLAND.

The Law admits not of sincere but imperfect obedience.

THE law of God is infinitely spiritual, and obligeth us not only to the performance of the external duties of obedience, but requires also the absolute perfection of the inward dispositions; not only that our love of God be sincere and cordial, but that it must be intense and perfect to the highest degree; thus, Deut. vi. 5. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*. The Law and covenant of works exact a perfection of degrees in our love and obedience, as well as of parts: it must not only be sincere, but complete; it not only tries our obedience by the touchstone, but weighs it in the balance, and gives us no grains of allowance. Now, is there any man upon earth that so loves God, or obeys him, that it is not possible he should love him more, or obey him

better? Do not some Christians exceed others in their grace and holiness? And might not all exceed themselves if they would? The Law gives no allowance for any failings. And therefore if thou canst love God more, and serve him better than thou dost, thou art not a fulfiller of the law, but a transgressor of it. Hence, St. Austin, in his Confessions, hath a pious meditation, 'Woe to our commendable life, if thou, Lord, setting thy mercy aside, shouldst examine it according to the strict rules of justice, and the Law.'

BP. HOPKINS.

A great reason, why man's miserable state by Nature, and the way of recovery by Grace are not understood, is, because it is too commonly supposed, that there is a covenant of sincere though imperfect obedience, through which men are to be saved by doing what, with a vague confusion of ideas, is usually called the best;—and that Christ is to make out the rest for them. So long as this pestilent notion prevails in the mind, I absolutely despair of any good being done. It is hard to say whether it is most affronting to the PURITY or to the MERCY of God: for it quite obscures both. Here is neither Law nor Gospel; neither the covenant of Works nor the covenant of Grace, but a vain attempt to mix them together. I would beseech those who still hold fast this notion, to pray earnestly for divine wisdom, and seriously to search the Scriptures. Let them not take it positively for granted, without examination, that WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT UP IN MUST BE RIGHT. There have been those who were as positive as you, who yet through Grace, have been made to see their error. Sure enough a true conviction of sin, and some real measure of self-knowledge once attained, will demolish all this scheme, which, indeed, has not a shadow of a foundation in Scripture.

There never were but two covenants; the first of Works, which requires perfect obedience: it was made with us all by nature in Adam. The second covenant is the covenant of Grace, which says, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*; and which effectually comprehends all who fly for refuge to it. In both cases, God sees such an union between the representative and the represented, between Adam and his natural posterity, between Christ and his spiritual

seed, that he views it right to impute death and destruction on the first account, and eternal life on the second. And it is utterly unreasonable for any man to say, that such a procedure is **UNRIGHTEOUS**, when the infinite God, who alone must be a proper judge of the nature of both these unions, declares it to be **RIGHTEOUS**. Let any man examine the 3d, 5th, and 10th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, where the two covenants are plainly set forth, and not even the possibility of any middle covenant is allowed. So that, under one or the other of these two covenants, we all are, and shall be found at the last day: and, let any man take care how he fancy to himself a middle rule by which God should try him, when, in reality, no such rule exists. These then are the circumstances of mankind. These are the considerations with which every man must begin, who would understand what Christianity is to do for him. He is guilty and condemned: he is evil and corrupt altogether, having lost both the favor and the image of God: what a death must that be?—to live without God, and to have God for his enemy. **REV. JOS. MILNER.**

They (the Arminians,) strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God to require any thing of us beyond our present power and ability to perform; and also hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Christ died to satisfy for the imperfections of our obedience, and has made way that our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect; wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistency. For they hold—That God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution, or law, that they were under originally; and, instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall.

Now, how can these things be made consistent? I would ask, What law these imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins, what need of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law is it? They cannot be a

breach of their new law; for (according to their principles) that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections; and, therefore, to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for, it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law; for that, they say, is entirely abolished, and we never were under it. They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And, therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deserve to be punished. What need, therefore, of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? What need of his suffering, to satisfy for that which is no fault, and, in its own nature, deserves no suffering? What need of Christ's dying to purchase that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience than imperfect, should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would be unjust in him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ's dying to prevail with God not to do unrighteously? If it be said—That Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a milder law; still I would inquire, What need of Christ's dying that we might not be under a law, which, by their principles, it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it?

So the Arminians are inconsistent with themselves, not only in what they say of Christ's satisfaction to atone for those imperfections which we cannot avoid; but also in what they say of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the sincere obedience of the new law. They grant—That by reason of original sin, we are utterly disabled for the performance of the condition, without new grace from God. But they affirm—That He gives such grace to all, by which the performance of the condition is truly possible. And upon this ground, He may, and doth most justly require it. If they intend to speak properly, by grace they must mean, that assistance which is of grace, or of free favor

and kindness. But yet they speak of it as very unreasonable, unjust, and cruel, for God to require that as the condition of pardon, that is become impossible by original sin. If it be so, what grace is there in giving assistance and ability to perform the condition of pardon? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an absolute debt, which God is bound to bestow, and which it would be unjust and cruel in Him to withhold, seeing He requires that as the condition of pardon, which we cannot perform without it?

PRES. EDWARDS.

Reply to those who impugn the Equity and Wisdom of God, for commanding that which we are unable to perform.

BUT what! are then the laws of God impossible to be fulfilled? Is it not our imputation to the equity and wisdom of God that he should command that which we are not able to perform?

I answer, 1st, The laws of God are in themselves possible as well as just; and there is nothing which he now requires of us which he did not endow us with strength in our creation to perform.

2dly, In this our fallen and corrupted estate our perfect obedience is become impossible; not because the law is more strict and rigorous, but because we are grown weaker and more averse.

3dly, It is no injustice in God to require what is impossible for us to perform, when that impossibility riseth from our own default. It is not God, but ourselves, who have made the observation of his laws impossible. And although we have wasted our stock, and are become bankrupts, yet he may righteously exact from us the debt of obedience which we owe him.

4thly, Although a perfect and consummate obedience be now impossible, yet an inchoate and sincere obedience is possible through the assistance of divine grace. And certainly that law which commands absolute perfection from us, requires us to endeavour after the highest degree that is attainable. So that these commands which exceed our present power are neither vain nor unjust: for they engage us to exert our strength to the utmost, whereby we shall certainly attain unto a far greater perfection in our obedience, than if we were enjoined that which were easy, or merely possible to perform; and such is the disingenuity of our temper, that as

much as the law were relaxed of its severity, so much proportionably we also should remit of our industry: and therefore since our sloth will take allowances to itself, it is far more expedient for us that God hath commanded from us things beyond the sphere of our present ability, than if he had commanded what was within it. For I much doubt whether if God did not command us to do more than we can, we should do as much as we do.

But you will say, to require more than is possible for us to perform may rather seem a discouragement than an excitement to our endeavours. For what natural man will attempt that which he knows to be impossible?

To this I answer, first, That there is a twofold impossibility; one that consists in the nature of the thing propounded unto us, another that consists only in an eminent and superlative degree of it. The first sort of impossibility, which consists in the nature of the thing itself, doth utterly forbid all attempts and endeavours. Never any wise man attempted to climb up into the sun, or to metamorphose himself into an angel, because the thing itself in all considerable degrees of it is impossible. But where the impossibility consists only in some eminent degree, and yet every degree that is attainable by us hath excellency enough in itself to invite and engage our endeavours, there the impossibility of the highest degree is no discouragement to a wise and rational man from attempting to do his uttermost. So it is in this case, many degrees of holiness and obedience are attainable by us, and every degree that we can attain unto is infinitely worth our pains and labor; and therefore though absolute perfection in it be impossible, yet this can be no discouragement from using our utmost endeavours. The more we strive after it, the more we shall still attain; and what we do attain is an abundant recompense of our industry, and carries in it so much excellency as will quicken and excite us unto farther improvements. And certainly whilst we endeavour toward unattainable perfection we shall attain unto much more than if we set our mark shorter; as he that aims at a star is likely to shoot much higher than he that aims only at a turf.

Secondly, As we must distinguish of impossibility, so likewise of perfection, which is either legal or evangelical.

First, There is a legal perfection, to which two things are necessarily required.

1st, Freedom from original sin, that there be no taint derived down upon our natures, no corruption inherent in us, that should incline us unto evil: for where original sin is, there legal righteousness and perfection cannot possibly be, for even this sin is a violation of the law.

2dly, There must be a perfect and exact actual fulfilling of all the laws of God, without failing in the least circumstance or least tittle of observation; for legal perfection cannot possibly consist with the least guilt.

Secondly, There is an evangelical perfection, which is a state, though not of innocency, yet of such a personal righteousness and holiness as shall be accepted and rewarded by God. Now this evangelical perfection consists in three things:

1st, In true and sincere repentance for our past offences, begging pardon at God's hands, and endeavouring to abstain from the commission of the like for the future.

2dly, In a true and lively faith, whereby we rely upon the merits and satisfaction of Christ alone for the remission of our sins.

3dly, In new and sincere obedience, endeavouring to live more holily, and to walk more strictly and perfectly before God, according to the rules he hath prescribed us in his holy laws. And this consists both in the mortification of the corrupt and sinful desires of the flesh, and in the daily quickening and renewing of the Spirit, whereby we grow in grace, and make farther progress in Christianity: when we do all this in the truth and sincerity of our souls, we are said to be perfect with an evangelical or Gospel perfection; and this indeed is all the inherent perfection and righteousness that is attainable by us in this life. Thus it is that the saints are in Scripture termed righteous. So Noah is called righteous, Gen. vii. 1. And Abraham pleads with God for the righteous in Sodom, Gen. xviii. 23, 24. And Zachary and Elizabeth have this testimony, that *they were both righteous, walking in all the commandments of God blameless*, Luke i. 6. Thus we have the ways of holiness called ways of righteousness, Psal. xxiii. 3. and the works of holiness, works of righteousness, Psal. xv. 2. Isa. lxiv. 2. &c. This evangelical perfection is attainable in this life, and indeed is attained by every sincere

and upright Christian.

BR. HOPKINS.

The meaning of being under Grace, and not under the Law.

THIS thing (I mean to tame the body and so forth) we are able to do, saith St. Paul, *seeing we are under grace, and not under the law*: what it is not to be under the law, he himself expoundeth. For not to be under the law, is not so to be understood, that every man may do what him listeth. But not to be under the law, is to have a free heart renewed with the Spirit, so that thou hast lust inwardly of thine own accord, to do that which the law commandeth, without compulsion, yea, though there were no law. For grace, that is to say, God's favor, bringeth us the Spirit, and maketh us love the law, so is there now no more sin, neither is the law now any more against us, but at one, and agreed with us, and we with it. But to be under the law, is to deal with the works of the law, and to work without the Spirit and grace, for so long, no doubt, sin reigneth in us through the law, that is to say, the law declareth that we are under sin, and that sin hath power and dominion over us, seeing we cannot fulfil the law, namely, within the heart, forasmuch as no man of nature favoreth the law, consenteth thereunto, and delighteth therein, which thing is exceeding great sin, that we cannot consent to the law, which law is nothing else save the will of God.

W. TINDAL, (Martyr.)

Works of Supererogation.

THERE are two points to be considered, 1st. Whether there are in the New Testament counsels of perfection given; that is to say, such rules which do not oblige all men to follow them, under the pain of sin, Luke xvii. 10.; but yet are useful to carry them on to a sublimer degree of perfection than is necessary in order to their salvation. 2d. Whether men by following these do more than they are bound to do, and by consequence, whether they have not thereby a stock of merit to communicate to others. The first of these leads to the second; for if there are no such counsels, then the foundation of Supererogation fails.

We deny both upon this ground, that

the great obligations of *loving God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves*, which are reckoned by our Saviour *the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets*, are of that extent, that it seems not possible to imagine how any thing can be acceptable to God that does not fall within them. Since if it is acceptable to God, then that obligation to love God so entirely must bind us to it; for if it is a sin not to love God up to this pitch, then it is a sin not to do every thing that we imagine will please him: and by consequence, if there is a degree of pleasing God, whether precept or counsel, that we do not study to attain to, we do not love him in a manner suitable to that. It seems a great many in the church of Rome are aware of this consequence, and therefore they have taken much pains to convince the world that we are not bound to love God at all; or, as others more cautiously word it, that we are only bound to value him above all things, but not to have a love of such a vast intension for him. This is a proposition that after all their softening it, gives so much horror to every Christian, that I need not be at any pains to confute it.

We are farther required in the New Testament, *to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness both of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. vii. 1: and to reckon ourselves *his and not our own*; and that *we are bought with a price*; and that therefore *we ought to glorify him both in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are his*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. These and many more like expressions are plainly precepts of general obligation, for nothing can be set forth in more positive words than these are: and it is not easy to imagine how any thing can go beyond them; for if we are Christ's property, purchased by him, then we ought to apply ourselves to every thing in which his honor, or the honor of his religion can be concerned, or which will be pleasing to him.

Our Saviour having charged the Pharisees so often, for adding so many of their ordinances to the laws of God, *teaching his fear by the precepts of men*, and the apostles condemning a *shew of will-worship and voluntary humility*, Col. ii. 23, seem to belong to this matter, and to be designed on purpose to repress the pride and singularities of affected hypocrites. Our Saviour

said to him that asked, *What he should do that he might have eternal life? Keep the Commandments*, Matth. xix. 16, 17. These words I do rather cite, because they are followed with a passage, that of all others in the New Testament, seems to look the likeliest a counsel of perfection; for when he who made the question, replied upon our Saviour's answer, *That he had kept all these from his youth up*, and added, *what lack I yet?* To that our Saviour answered, *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow me*: Matt. xix. 20, 21. And by the words that follow, of the difficulty of a *rich man's entering into the kingdom of Heaven*; this is more fully explained. The meaning of all that whole passage is this: Christ called that person to abandon all, and come and follow him, in such a manner as he had called his apostles. So that here is no counsel but a positive command given to that particular person, upon this occasion. By perfect is only to be meant complete, in order to that to which he pretended, which was eternal life. And that also explains the word in that period, *treasures in Heaven*, another expression for eternal life, to compensate the loss which he would have made by the sale of his possessions. So that here is no counsel, but a special command given to this person, in order to his own attaining eternal life.

Nor is it to be inferred from hence that this is proposed to others in the way of a counsel; for as in cases either of a famine or persecution, it may come to be to some a command, to sell all in order to the relief of others, as it was in the first beginnings of Christianity; so in ordinary cases to do it, might be rather a tempting of Providence than a trusting to it, for then a man should part with the means of his subsistence, which God has provided for him, without a necessary and pressing occasion. Therefore our Saviour's words, *Sell that ye have and give alms*, Luke xii. 33, as they are delivered in the strain and peremptoriness of a command, so they must be understood to bind as positive commands do: not so constantly as a negative command does, since in every minute of our life that binds: but there is a rule and order in our obeying positive commands. We must not rest on the Sabbath-day, if a *work of necessity* or

charity calls us to put to our hands: we must not obey our parents in disobeying a public law: so if we have families, or the necessities of a feeble body, and a weak constitution, for which God hath supplied us with that which will afford us *food convenient for us*, we must not throw up those provisions, and cast ourselves upon others. Therefore that precept must be moderated and expounded, so as to agree with the other rules and orders that God has set us.

A distinction is therefore to be made between those things that do universally and equally bind all mankind; and those things that do more specially bind some sorts of men, and that only at some times. There are greater degrees of charity, gravity, and all other virtues to which the clergy for instance are more bound than other men; but these are to them precepts and not counsels. And in the first beginnings of Christianity there were greater obligations laid upon all Christians, as well as greater gifts were bestowed on them. It is true, in the point of marriage St. Paul does plainly allow, that such as *marry do well, but that such as marry not do better*, 1 Cor. vii. 38. But the meaning of that is not, as if an unmarried life were a state of perfection, beyond that which a man is obliged to: but only this, that as to the course of this life, and the present distress, and as to the judgment that is to be made of men by their actions, no man is to be thought to do amiss who marries; but yet he who marries not, is to be judged to do better. But yet inwardly and before God this matter may be far otherwise; for he who marries not and burns, certainly does worse than he who marries and lives chastely. But he who finding that he can limit himself without endangering his purity; though no law restrains him from marrying, yet seeing that he is like to be tempted to be too careful about the concerns of this life if he marries, is certainly under obligations to follow that course of life in which there are fewer temptations, and greater opportunities to attend on the service of God.

With relation to outward actions, and to the judgments that from visible appearances are to be made of them, some actions may be said to be better than others, which yet are truly good: but as to the particular obligations that every man is

under, with relation to his own state and circumstances, and for which he must answer at the last day, these being secret, and so not subject to the judgments of men, certainly every man is strictly bound to do the best he can: to choose that course of life in which he thinks he may do the best services to God and man: nor are these free to him to choose or not: he is under obligations, and he sins if he sees a more excellent thing that he might have done, and contents himself with a lower or less valuable thing. St. Paul had wherein to glory; for whereas it was lawful for him as an apostle to suffer the Corinthians to supply him in temporals, when he was serving them in spiritual things; yet he chose rather for the honor of the gospel, and to take away all occasion of censure from those who sought for it, *to work with his own hands, and not to be burdensome to them*. But in that state of things, though there was no law or outward obligation upon him to spare them, he was under an inward law of doing all things to the glory of God: and by this law he was as much bound, as if there had been an outward compulsory law lying upon him.

This distinction is to be remembered, between such an obligation as arises out of a man's particular circumstances, and such other motives as can be only known to a man himself, and such an obligation as may be fastened on him by stated and general rules: he may be absolutely free from the latter of these, and yet be secretly bound by those inward and stronger constraints of the love of God, and of zeal for his glory. Enough seems to be said to prove that there are no counsels of perfection in the Gospel: that all the rules set to us in it are in the style and form of precepts; and that though there may be some actions of more heroic virtue, and more sublime piety than others, to which all men are not obliged by equal or general rules; yet such men to whose circumstances and station they do belong, are strictly obliged by them, so that they should sin if they did not put them in practice.

This being thus made out, the foundation of works of supererogation is destroyed. But if it should be acknowledged that there were such counsels of perfection in the Scripture, there are still two other clear proofs, to shew that there can be no

such thing as supererogating with God. First, every man not only has sinned, but has still so much corruption about him, as to feel the truth of that of St. James, *in many things we offend all*. Now, unless it can be supposed that by obeying those counsels, a man can compensate with Almighty God for his sins, there is no ground to think that he can supererogate: he must first clear his own score, before he can imagine that any thing upon his account can be forgiven or imputed to another: and if the guilt of sin is eternal, and the pretended merit of obeying counsels is only temporary, no temporary merit can take off an eternal guilt. So that it must first be supposed, that a man both is, and has been perfect as to the precepts of obligation, before it can be thought that he should have an overplus of merit.

The other clear argument from Scripture against works of supererogation is, that there is nothing in the whole New Testament that does in any sort favor them: we are always taught to trust to the mercies of God and to the death and intercession of Christ, and *to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12; but we are never once directed to look for any help from saints, or to think that we can do any thing for another man's soul in this way. The Psalm has it, *No man can by any means give a ransom for his brother's soul*: the words of Christ, Luke xvii. 10, are full and express against it.

The words in the parable of the five foolish virgins and the five wise, may seem to favor it, but they really contradict it; for it was the foolish virgins that desired the wise to give them of their oil; which, if any will apply to a supposed communication of merit, they ought to consider that the proposition is made by the foolish, and the answer of the wise virgins is full against it, *Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you*, Mat. xxv. 9: what follows, of bidding them *go to them that sell, and buy for themselves*, is only a piece of the fiction of the parable, which cannot enter into any part of the application of it. What St. Paul says of his *filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church*, Col. i. 24, is, as ap-

pears by the words that follow, *whereof I am made a minister*, only applicable to the edification that the church received from the sufferings of the apostles: it being a great confirmation to them of the truth of the gospel, when those who preached it suffered so constantly and so patiently for it; by which they both confirmed what they had preached, and set an example to others, of adhering firmly to it. And since Christ is related to his church, as a head to the members, it is in some sort his suffering himself, when his members suffer; and that conformity which they ought to express to him as their head, was necessary to make up the due proportion that ought to be between the head and the members. So St. Paul rejoiced in his being made *conformable to him*: and this, as it is a sense that the words will well bear, so it is certain they are capable of no other sense; for if the sufferings of the apostles were meritorious in behalf of the other Christians, some plain account must have been given of this in the New Testament, at least to do honor to the memory of such apostles as had then died for the faith. If it is suggested, that the living apostles were too modest to claim it to themselves; that it will not satisfy; all runs quite in a contrary style; the mercies of God, and the blood of Christ being always repeated, whereas these are never once named. Now to imagine that there can be any thing of such great use to us, in which the Scripture should be not only silent, but should run in a strain totally different from it, is not conceivable: for if in any thing, the gospel ought to be full and explicit in all that which concerns our peace and reconciliation with God, and the means of our escaping his wrath, and obtaining his favor.

BE. BURNET.

This is not a human notion, but an absolute sarcasm of the devil, mocking and deriding the blindness into which he has betrayed us; that, when God has published his law, to shew for what perfection man was created, and into what ruin he has fallen, the devil should put such an irony upon us, as to persuade us that now, in our present ruined state, we can even go beyond that law! MELANCTHON.

SECTION VIII.—ON REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

What Regeneration is not, and what it is.

To be born again, or new-born, is not to have any essential change to pass upon the essential parts of human nature; the essential parts of human nature I call the soul and body, which remain the same for substance after Regeneration, as they were before. Indeed Flagicius Illiricus, that held original sin to be the substance of the soul, was driven by force of consequence also to affirm, that regeneration made a change in the substance and essential of the soul. And the Familists of late have entertained strange and blasphemous conceits concerning Regeneration, as if it were a metamorphosis of the creature into the very being and nature of God, making that change that is wrought, thereby to be not so much a new creature, as a deity. But these are wild and uncouth fancies; for if regeneration wrought any such change upon man, as that he is not now the same person regenerated, as he was unregenerated; how doth the apostle say, *I was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious?* 1 Tim. i. 13. Then also grace, instead of converting, destroyed the sinner, and consequently no sinner yet was or shall be saved. But enough of this: grace therefore makes no such physical change upon the natural being or essence of man, but the understanding, will, and affections, are the same for nature and essence in the regenerate as in the unregenerate, but only they are rectified and endowed with infused habits.

Secondly, Regeneration is not a conversion from an idolatrous and an erroneous way of worship, to the profession and acknowledgment of the true faith; much less then is it not a conversion from one sect and party of Christians to another, as many ignorant persons suppose, that when they are won over from one truth, it may be to an error, presently they think they are converted by it, because they join in with another party of Christians. But there may be proselytes gained over to the church, either from heathenism, or from popish idolatry, whose souls notwithstanding may never be gained over unto Christ. As travellers that come into a foreign land still remain subjects to their natural lord, so these may come into the church, which is the kingdom of Christ upon earth, and

yet still remain slaves to their natural lord the devil. Indeed I find in Scripture, that when Christ and his apostles labored to convert the Jews or others unto the profession and acknowledgment of Christ, and to bring them to a thorough work of regeneration, the chiefest thing that they insisted on, was to persuade them to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Why, now, though this dogmatical faith is not regeneration, yet it was then almost an infallible test of it; and to persuade them to believe that Jesus was the Christ, was to prevail upon them to be truly and really converted; it was seldom seen among those primitive Christians, where there was no carnal respects, or outward advantage that could commend the gospel to the secular interests of men; when the only reward of professing of Christ, was reproaches, persecution, and martyrdom: seldom was it seen that any were won over from heathenism or Judaism, to make profession of the despised name of Christ, but such who were inwardly renewed by that almighty grace, that can conquer all the despites and affronts of the world. Few were so foolish as to profess Christ in hypocrisy, when that hypocrisy would endanger their own lives; and yet because it was but in hypocrisy, it could gain them no benefit by his death. Therefore it is that the Scripture speaks of those that made a profession of the name of Christ, as if they were regenerated, because it was then almost an infallible mark of it. Thus you have it in 1 John iv. 15, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* So again in chap. v., *He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* But now when the very name of a Christian is become a title of honor, and the same punishments do now attend the denying of Christ, that then attended the acknowledgment of him; men may indeed be called by his name, that never were effectually called by his grace, and may make a profession of the true faith, and yet remain Christian infidels.

Thirdly, The reformation of a dissolute and debauched life falls short of this spiritual new birth. This is that with which many do soothe up themselves, when they reflect back upon the wild extravagances of their former times; how out-

rageously wicked they were; drunkards, unclean, riotous, blasphemers, swcarers, and the very worst of sinners; and now they find themselves deadened to these things, and they are grown men of stayed and sober lives and conversations, straight they conclude, that certainly such a great change as this is could never be made on them, otherwise than by a renewing work of the Spirit; and yet this amendment there may be where there is no regeneration. Men may gather up their loose and dissolute lives within the compass of civility and moral honesty, and yet they may be utter strangers to a work of true and saving grace; and this may be ascribed to two grounds; partly to the convictions of God's Spirit, awakening natural conscience to see the horror, and to foresee the danger that is in such infamous sins; and partly to prudence, that they have gained from the frequent experiences that they have had of the manifold inconveniences that they have brought upon themselves by such sins formerly. These two may make a great amendment in men's lives and conversations; and yet both these convictions and prudence fall far short of true regenerating grace. All the seeming amendment of such men's lives may be effected two ways; either by changing their sins, or by tiring out of the sinner.

First, The life may seem to be reformed, when men only change their rude and boisterous sins for such as are demure and sober. When men from riotous grow worldly; from profane and irreligious they grow superstitious and hypocritical; from atheists to be heretics; when men make this change of boisterous and roaring sins for those that are more demure and sober, they are apt to think that this change must be a change of their natures; whereas indeed it is but only a changing and bartering of their sins; and usually it is such a change too, that though it render the life more inoffensive, yet it makes the soul more incurable. St. Austin long since hath told us, That vices may give place, when yet no virtue takes it; but one vice gives place to another.

Secondly, The life may seem to be reformed, when as men are only tired out with their sins, or when men have outgrown their sins. There are sins that are proper and peculiar to such a state and season of a man's life, upon the altering of which they vanish and disappear. The

sins of youth drop off in declining age, being then incongruous. This is that which deceives many, when they look back upon these numberless vanities that they have forsaken and shaken off, and find how deadened their hearts are to those sinful ways which before they delighted in: they conclude, that certainly this great change must needs proceed from true grace; whereas, indeed, *they do not leave their sins, but their sins leave them*, and drop off from them as rotten fruit from a tree. The faculties of their souls, and the members of their bodies, that before were instruments of sin unto righteousness, are, it may be, blunted and become unserviceable; this maim of nature is far from regenerating grace, that doth not disable a man from the service of sin, but only sets him free from it.

Fourthly, To be endowed with eminent gifts, and with the common graces of the Spirit, is not to be regenerated. These may be bestowed upon the worst of men. There is grace that renders a man lovely in God's eyes, and there is grace that renders a man lovely only in men's eyes; of both these one and the same Spirit is the Author. In some the Spirit sanctifies the heart, and in others it only illuminates the head. Balaam was irradiated with the supernatural light of prophecy. Judas was dignified with the extraordinary office of the apostleship, and sent out to work miracles, together with the rest of the apostles. Yea, so much are the gifts of the Spirit the operations of the Spirit, that they are in a peculiar manner called the Holy Ghost himself: see this in Acts i. 4. Christ commands his disciples there to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father; that is, for the gifts of the Spirit, for that was the promise of the Father; and he tells them in the eighth verse, *That they should receive power after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them*. Certain it is, that they had already received the Holy Ghost in the sanctifying graces of it: we cannot think that they were in an unregenerate, unconverted estate after Christ's death; but they had not as yet received the plentiful effusion of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; of speaking with tongues, of a bold and ready utterance, of working of miracles, and the like, which were then necessary to qualify them for the successful spreading of a new doctrine. And this is more clear in Acts viii.; when Philip

had preached at Samaria, it is said he converted many, in verse 12 ; so that doubtless many of them had received the Spirit already in its saving graces ; and yet it is said in verse 15, that the Holy Ghost was not yet fallen upon any of them ; that is, though they were converted, yet they were not endowed with those wonderful gifts of the Spirit before mentioned, which afterwards they received. Now, had he been among them, and heard them speak of Christ and gospel mysteries with affections and convictions beyond natural capacities ; had we heard them speak unstudied languages, and seen them working miracles, healing the sick, raising the dead, could we have thought that it was possible for any of those, who were so favored and filled by the Holy Ghost, to be yet in an unregenerate state—in a state of wrath and damnation ? Yet that there might some of them be so, is clear ; for the apostle speaks of the like ; such who had *tasted the heavenly gift were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and yet they might fall away*, Heb. vi. 4. That is, there were them in those primitive times that had an effusion of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost poured out upon them ; of speaking with tongues ; of a bold and ready utterance ; of working of miracles, and the like ; and yet such as these, that had tasted of these heavenly gifts, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, fell away ; that is, they were never truly regenerate. And certainly, if these extraordinary gifts might be found separate from true grace, much more may those inferior gifts that the Spirit now dispenseth among Christians be without true regenerating grace. A man may discourse of spiritual mysteries copiously and clearly ; he may have gifts of knowledge and utterance ; he may preach with evidence and demonstration, and pray with enlargement and affection, and yet notwithstanding all this, be an utter stranger to saving work of grace. Gifts prove nothing : these gifts may be but the gilding of a rotten post, the varnish of a corrupt heart. As it was a custom of old to crown those beasts' heads with garlands of flowers that were ordained to be a sacrifice ; so God may sometimes crown the heads of wicked men with flowery parts and gifts, whom yet he intends to make a sacrifice of to his wrath and justice.

Fifthly, and lastly, A civil and harmless demeanour is not this state of regenera-

tion. There are many that are of a good nature, that live blamelessly as to the world, and that nearly resemble grace ; such as St. Paul was, who, speaking of himself, saith, *touching the law, he was blameless*. And such was the young man in the Gospel, that came to Christ, and demanded what further lesson he should take out, having obeyed all the commands, as he thought ; and yet this also is short of the regenerating grace of the Spirit, and argues only a sweet disposition, not a gracious heart.

And thus you see how easily men may mistake themselves in the great work of regeneration, upon which depends their eternal happiness ; for *except a man be born again he shall never see the kingdom of God* ; and yet it is too much to be feared, that many, yea, very many rest upon these things, and think the great determining change, is certainly wrought upon them only, because they are morally honest, or eminently gifted, or much reformed, or gained over to the profession of the truth with such a sect or party of professors ; whereas indeed the new birth consists in none of all these things.

Briefly therefore to inform you what it is ; you may take it thus :

Regeneration is a *change of the whole* man in *every* part and faculty thereof, *from a state of sinful nature to a state of supernatural grace*, whereby the image of God, that we defaced and lost by our first transgression, is again in some good measure restored. Now as every science hath its proper terms, that are so many keys to unlock the mysteries contained in it ; so especially divinity abounds with terms that are peculiar to its own doctrine ; and in no one point more than in this, of the great change that a sinner undergoes when he is translated from a state of nature to a state of grace. That grace, that concurs now unto this great change, it is of two sorts :

Either such as alters the relations wherein we stand unto God, or such as alters the dispositions and habits of our souls. Of the former sort are election, which is antecedent to our faith, and reconciliation, justification, adoption, and mystical union, which are consequents unto it : of these graces it is not my business now to treat, because they lodge only in the breast of God, and their formal effect is not a supernatural infusion of any new habits or principles, but only of new relations : when we speak of a person justified and adopted,

the true adequate notions of these terms do not declare how his heart is changed towards God; but, if I may so speak, how God's heart is changed towards him; not that he stands otherwise affected unto God, but otherwise related to God than formerly. Of a guilty malefactor he becomes acquitted and accepted by the grace of justification, and of an alien he becomes a son and heir by the grace of adoption. But then there are other graces that are inherent in us, and work a mighty change in our moral habitual principles, and whereby we also, though not so properly, are denominated gracious. God is denominated gracious by the grace of justification, adoption, mystical union, and election; and we are denominated gracious by the habitual graces that this Spirit infuseth into us, and works in us; and these are every where besparkled up and down in the Scripture, where it speaks of faith, love, patience, self-denial, meekness, knowledge, temperance, and the rest of them. These, as so many stars, ought continually to shine forth in a Christian's life; and though they may appear very differently, some obscure and cloudy, and others bright and glittering; some at one season setting, and others at another season rising; yet they all make up but one constellation, whereby we are translated, as the Scripture speaks, out of darkness into marvellous light. Now the framing of this complexion or body of grace in the heart, is that which we call Regeneration, it being a fixed constellation of all the several graces of the Spirit in the heart. The Scripture gives it divers other appellations: it is called the *new man* in Eph. iv. 24; the *new creature*, Gal. vi. 15; a *transformation into the image of God*, 2 Cor. xii. 3. 8. 18; a *participation of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4, and in other places, too long to be insisted on now, it is called *conversion*, *effectual calling*, *sanctification*, and *renovation*; and sometimes too it is termed by the name of two principal graces, the two greatest limbs of the *new man*, and they are faith and repentance, that are often put for the whole work of regeneration. All these expressions set forth the same work of grace upon the heart, though they may be understood under different notions. The *new man*, that denotes the greatness and entireness of the change. The *new creature*, that denotes that Almighty Power

whereby that entire change is wrought. The image of God and the divine nature denote that conformity that is thereby made in us to the holy will and nature of God. Effectual calling and conversion denote our returning to God after our wandering and straying from him. Sanctification denotes that influence that this great change hath set to us apart for God from common uses; for sanctification doth, in strictness of speech, signify a separation of a person or thing from profane and ordinary uses to the service and glory of God. Indeed, sanctification doth, in strictness of speech, differ from regeneration, though commonly we use them promiscuously; for regeneration is the implanting of the habits and principles of grace, but sanctification is properly the strengthening and increasing of them; it is the progress that a holy soul makes when it passeth on from one degree of grace to another. Regeneration is in nature before justification, but sanctification follows it; and hence we may observe the order in which the apostle rangeth them in that famous place; that climax in Rom. viii. 29, 30, where every grace is a round of the *scala cæli*, that Jacob's ladder, whereby we ascend into heaven: it is a place, if any in the book of God, that deserves our most serious thoughts, says the apostle; *Whom he did foreknow, them also he did predestinate*. If you ask wherein God's prescience and foreknowledge differ from predestination, a question that hath caused much strife, I answer, Prescience here respects the end, predestination respects the means how to obtain it; so that the sense is this, Whom God foreknew that he would save, them he did predestinate to the means of salvation; *He hath predestinated us*, says the apostle, *that we might be conformed to the image of his Son*; that is, he predestinated them to grace, that is, the way and means to glory: so then where it is said, whom God foreknew, that signifies God's purpose and intention of saving some; where it is said, those he did predestinate, that signifies God's purpose of calling those whom he did intend to save unto the knowledge of his Son, and to the means whereby he might save them. It follows, *whom he predestinated, them he also called*; that is, with an effectual call, which is the same with regeneration; whom he predestinated, them he regenerated; and

whom he thus called or regenerated, *them he justified*. Here you see justification is put after regeneration, though indeed in order of nature it follows regeneration, for we are justified by faith: now faith is part of that new nature that is bestowed upon us in regeneration; we are justified by faith; wherefore faith is before justification, and is part of our regeneration. The apostle now proceeds to the last link of this golden chain, *Whom he justifies, them he also glorifies*; where we may observe that it is at least probable that the glorification that the apostle here speaks of, may not be the glory of Heaven, because he speaks of it as a thing already past and done; whom he hath justified he hath glorified: we may, without offering violence to the words, interpret it of *sanctification*; whom he hath justified, them he hath glorified, that is, sanctified; so that glorification here is no more than sanctification, for sanctification is also called glory. *We also beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18: from glory to glory, that is, from one degree of sanctification to another; for indeed holiness, that is, our sanctification, and the glory of Heaven, are but one and the same thing for substance, differing in degrees and circumstances. BR. HOPKINS.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. These words were spoken to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This *master in Israel* came to Jesus by night. Convinced he seems to have been of the power which attended his ministry, but, under a still stronger attachment to his worldly interest, he durst not openly avow his conviction. Our Lord, at once to enlighten his mind with the most salutary of all truths, and level his pride of understanding by the manner of conveying it, saith to him, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* This appears to have been extremely astonishing, by his answer in the following verse: *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?*

It is not my purpose to give a tedious explication of the passage, or entertain the reader with a profusion of criticism

upon the words. This expression, *the kingdom of God*, hath various significations in Scripture, but chiefly two in the New Testament: 1. The gospel dispensation, or government of the Messiah, as distinguished from the preceding periods. 2. The kingdom of heaven, where the sincere disciples of Christ shall be put in full possession of the blessings of his purchase. I take it to be the last of these that is, either only, or chiefly intended in this place. Both of them indeed may be meant in their proper order, and for their different purposes. An open profession and receiving the external badge, was necessary to a concealed friend and cowardly disciple; but a right to the spiritual privileges of the gospel, and the promise of eternal life, was the only thing that could make the profession valuable or desirable. Accordingly, our Saviour seems to speak of both in his reply to Nicodemus' admission into the visible church by baptism, and renovation by the Holy Ghost: Jesus answered, *Verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

I am sensible that Regeneration, or the new birth, is a subject at present very unfashionable; or at least a style of language which hath gone very much into desuetude. It is, however, a subject of unspeakable moment; or rather, it is the one subject in which all others meet as in a centre; the grand inquiry, in comparison of which every thing else, how excellent soever, is but specious trifling. What doth it signify, though you have food to eat in plenty, and variety of raiment to put on, if you are not born again! if after a few mornings and evenings spent in unthinking mirth, sensuality, and riot, you die in your sins, and lie down in sorrow? What doth it signify, though you are well accomplished in every other respect, to act your part in life, if you meet at last with this repulse from the Supreme Judge, *Depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity?*

If this subject is indeed unfashionable and neglected, we are miserably deceiving ourselves. If a new nature is necessary, to attempt to repair and new-model the old will be found to be lost labor. If the spring is polluted, and continues so, what a vain and fruitless attempt is it to endeavor, by addition or by foreign mixture, to purify the streams! Just so, it is by no

means sufficient; or, to speak more properly, it is altogether impossible to reform the irregularities and vicious lives of sinners, and bring them to a real conformity to the law of God, till their hearts are renewed and changed. It is like rearing up an old fabric, adding to its towers, and painting its walls, while the foundation is gone. See what the prophet Ezekiel says of such foolish builders: *Wo to the foolish prophets!—because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it.*

But perhaps the substance of the doctrine is retained, while the language is held in derision. We are told it is but a figurative expression, and the same in its meaning with repentance or reformation. Doubtless it is so. And it were greatly to be wished that many did thoroughly understand what is implied in repentance unto life. But the reader is entreated to observe, that it is a metaphor frequently used in the Holy Scripture. I think also it is a metaphor of peculiar propriety and force, well adapted to bring into view, both the nature of the change which it describes, and the means by which it is accomplished. If there are any who, in writing or speaking on this subject, have introduced or invented unscriptural phrases, and gone into unintelligible mysticism, this is neither wonderful in itself, nor ought it to be any injury or disparagement to the truth. There is no subject, either of divine or human learning, on which some have not written weakly, foolishly, or erroneously; but that ought not to excite any aversion to the doctrine itself which hath been perverted or abused. . . .

Let me now, in the most earnest manner, beseech every person to consider deliberately with himself what is the import of this truth, and how firmly it is established. It appears that regeneration, repentance, conversion, or call it what you will, is a very great change from the state in which every man comes into the world. This appears from our Saviour's assertion, that we must be *born again*. It appears from a great variety of other Scripture phrases, and is the certain con-

sequence of some of the most essential doctrines of the Gospel.

With what jealousy ought this to fill many of the state of their souls! How slight and inconsiderable a thing is it that, with multitudes, passes for religion; especially in these days of serenity and sunshine to the church, when they are not compelled by danger to weigh the matter with deliberation! A few cold forms, a little outward decency, some faint desires rather than endeavors, is all they can afford for securing their everlasting happiness. Can the weakness and insufficiency of these things possibly appear in a stronger light, than when true religion is considered as a new creation and a second birth? If the inspired writers be allowed to express themselves either with propriety or truth, it is painful to think of the unhappy deluded state of so great a number of our fellow-sinners.

Will so great a change take place, and yet have no visible effect? Had any great change happened in your worldly circumstances, from riches to poverty, or from poverty to riches, all around you would have speedily discerned it. Had any such change happened in your health, it had been impossible to conceal it. Had it happened in your intellectual accomplishments, from ignorance to knowledge, it would have been quickly celebrated. How comes it then to be quite undiscernible, when it is from sin to holiness? I am sensible that men are very ingenious in justifying their conduct, and very successful in deceiving themselves. They will tell us that religion is a hidden thing, not to be seen by the world, but lying open to his view who judgeth the secrets of all hearts. And doubtless this is, in one view, a great truth. True religion is not given to ostentation; diffident of itself, it is unwilling to promise much, lest it should be found wanting. But it ought to be considered that, however concealed the inward principle may be, the practical effects must of necessity appear. As one table of the moral law consists entirely of our duty to others, whoever is born again, and renewed in the spirit of his mind, will be found a quite different person from what he was before, in his conversation with his fellow-creatures.

Hypocritical pretences to extraordinary sanctity are indeed highly criminal in themselves, and extremely odious in the sight

of God. But the present age does not seem to have the least tendency to this extreme. There is another thing much more common, not less absurd, and infinitely more dangerous to mankind in general—a demand upon the public, that, by an extraordinary effort of charity, they should always suppose the reality of religion in the heart, when there is not the least symptom of it in the life. Nay, some are hardly satisfied even with this, but insist that men should believe well of others, not only without, but against evidence. A bad opinion expressed of a man, even upon the most open instances of profanity, is often answered with, ‘What have you to do to judge the heart?’ It is amazing to think what inward consolation sinners derive to themselves from this claim of forbearance from their fellow-creatures. Let me beseech all such to consider, that as God cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked, so in truth they usually deceive none but themselves. Every human affection, when it is strong and lively, will discover itself by its apparent effects; and it is as true of religious affections as of any other, that ‘the tree is known by its fruits.’

But if they have reason to suspect themselves whose change is not visible to others, how much more those who, if they deal faithfully, must confess they are quite strangers to any such thing in their own hearts? I do not mean that every person should be able to give an account of the time and manner of his conversion. That is often effected in so slow and gradual a manner, that it cannot be confined to a precise or particular period. But surely those who are no way sensible of any change in the course of their affections, and the objects at which they are pointed, can scarcely think that they are born again, or be able to affix a proper meaning to so strong an expression. I have read an observation of an eminent author, That those who cannot remember the time when they were ignorant or unlearned, have reason to conclude that they are so still; because, however slow and insensible the steps of improvement have been, the effects will at last clearly appear, by comparison with an uncultivated state. In the same manner, whoever cannot remember the time when he served the former lusts in his ignorance, has reason to conclude that no change deserving the name of regeneration has ever yet taken place.

It will be perhaps accounted an exception to this, that some are so early formed for the service of God, by his blessing on a pious education, and happily preserved from ever entering upon the destructive paths of vice, that they cannot be supposed to recollect the time when they were at enmity with God. But this is an objection of no consequence. The persons here described have generally so much tenderness of conscience, so deep a sense of the evil of sin, that of all others they will most readily discover and confess the workings of corruption in their own hearts, and that *law in their members that warreth against the law of God in their minds*. They will be of all others most sensible of the growth of the new, and mortification of the old nature; and will often remember the folly and vanity of youth, in instances that by most others would have been reckoned perfectly harmless.

What hath been said in this section is expressly designed to awaken such secure and careless formalists as may have any general belief of the word of God. To be born again must be a great change. Can you then suppose that you have undergone this, not only without any application to it, but without so much as being sensible of it, or being able to discover its proper effects?

DR. WITHERSPOON.

Necessity of Conversion.

SUCH is the stupid dotage of vain man, he can more easily persuade himself to believe that the sun itself should be transformed into a dunghill, that the holy God should lay aside his nature, and turn heaven into a place of impure darkness, than that he himself should need to undergo a change. O the powerful infatuation of self-love, that men in the gall of bitterness should think it is well with their spirits, and fancy themselves in a case good enough to enjoy divine pleasure; that (as the toad’s venom offends not itself) their loathsome wickedness, which all good men detest, is a pleasure to them; and while it is as the poison of asps under their lips, they roll it as a dainty bit, revolve it in their thoughts with delight! Their wickedness speaks itself out to the very hearts of others (Psal. xxxvi. 1, 2), while it never affects their own, and is found out to be hateful, while they still continue flattering themselves. And because they are without spot in their own eyes, they adventure so high, as to presume themselves so in

the pure eyes of God too; and instead of designing to be like God, they already imagine him such a one as themselves, Psal. l. Hence their allotment of time (in the whole of it, the Lord knows, little enough) for the working out of their salvation spends apace; while they do not so much as understand their business. Their measured hour is almost out; an immense eternity is coming on upon them; and, lo! they stand as men that cannot find their hands. Urge them to the speedy, serious endeavor of a heart-change, earnestly to intend the business of regeneration, of becoming new creatures; they seem to understand it as little, as if they were spoken to in an unknown tongue, and are in the like posture with the confounded builders of Babel, they know not what we mean, or would put them upon. They wonder what we would have them do. 'They are (say they) orthodox Christians: they believe all the articles of the Christian creed: they detest all heresy and false doctrine: they are no strangers to the house of God, but diligently attend the enjoined solemnities of public worship: some possibly can say, they are sober, just, charitable, peaceable; and others that can boast less of their virtues, yet say, they are sorry for their sins, and pray God to forgive them.' And if we urge them concerning their translation from the state of nature to that of grace, their becoming new creatures, their implantation into Christ; they say they have been baptised, and therein regenerate, and what would we have more?

But to how little purpose is it to equivocate with God? to go about to put a fallacy upon the Judge of spirits? or escape the animadversion of his fiery, flaming eye? or elude his determinations, and pervert the true intent and meaning of his most established constitutions and laws? Darest thou venture thy soul upon it? that this is all God means, by having a new heart created, a right spirit renewed in us; by being made God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; by becoming new creatures, old things being done away, all things made new; by so learning the truth as it is in Jesus, to the putting off the old man, and putting on the new; which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness; by being begotten of God's own will by the word of truth; to be (the ἀρχή) the chief excellency, the prime glory (as certainly his

new creature is his best creature), the first fruits, or the devoted part of all his creatures; by having Christ formed in us; by partaking the divine nature, the incorruptible seed, the seed of God; by being born of God, spirit of spirit; as of earthly parents we are born flesh of flesh, Psal. li. Eph. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 23, 24. Jam. i. 18. Gal. iv. 19. 2 Pet. i. 4. John iii. 6. When my eternal blessedness lies upon it, had I not need to be sure that I hit the true meaning of these Scriptures? especially, that at least I fall not below it, and rest not in any thing short of what Scripture makes indispensably necessary to my entering into the kingdom of God? Howe.

Of the persons in our congregations, to whom we not only may, but must preach the doctrine of conversion plainly and directly, are those who, with the name indeed of Christians, have hitherto passed their lives without any internal religion whatever; who have not at all thought upon the subject; who, a few easy and customary forms excepted, (and which with them are mere forms,) cannot truly say of themselves, that they have done one action, which they would not have done equally, if there had been no such thing as a God in the world; or that they have ever sacrificed any passion, any present enjoyment, or even any inclination of their minds, to the restraints and prohibitions of religion; with whom indeed religious motives have not weighed a feather in the scale against interest or pleasure. To these it is utterly necessary that we preach conversion. At this day we have not Jews and Gentiles to preach to; but these persons are really in as unconverted a state as any Jew or Gentile could be in our Saviour's time. They are no more Christians as to any actual benefit of Christianity to their souls, than the most hardened Jew, or the most profligate Gentile was in the age of the Gospel. As to any difference in the two cases, the difference is all against them. These must be converted before they can be saved. The course of their thoughts must be changed, the very principles upon which they act must be changed. Considerations, which never, or which hardly ever entered into their minds, must deeply and perpetually engage them. Views and motives, which did not influence them at all,

either as checks from doing evil, or as inducements to do good, must become the views and motives which they regularly consult, and by which they are guided; that is to say, there must be a revolution of principle: the visible conduct will follow the change; but there must be a revolution within. A change so entire, so deep, so important as this, I do allow to be a conversion, and no one, who is in the situation above described, can be saved without undergoing it; and he must necessarily both be sensible of it at the time, and remember it all his life afterwards. It is too momentous an event ever to be forgot. A man might as easily forget his escape from a shipwreck. Whether it was sudden, or whether it was gradual, if it was effected, (and the fruits will prove that,) it was a true conversion: and every such person may justly both believe and say it himself, that he was converted at a particular assignable time. It may not be necessary to speak of his conversion, but he will always think of it, with unbounded thankfulness to the Giver of all grace, the Author of all mercies, spiritual as well as temporal.

PALEY.

The Spirit, the Author of Conversion.

It is a very difficult work to draw a soul out of the hands and strong chains of Satan, and out of the pleasing entanglements of the world, and out of its own natural perverseness, to yield up itself unto God,—to deny itself, and live to him, and in so doing, to run against the main stream, and the current of the ungodly world without, and corruption within. The strongest rhetoric, the most moving and persuasive way of discourse, is all too weak; the tongue of men or angels cannot prevail with the soul to free itself, and shake off all that detains it. Although it be convinced of the truth of those things that are represented to it, yet still it can and will hold out against it, and say, *Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris.*

The power of man is too weak to pluck any soul out of the crowd of the world, and to set it in amongst the select number of believers. Only the Father of Spirits hath absolute command of spirits, viz. the souls of men, to work on them as he pleaseth, and where he will. This powerful, this sanctifying Spirit knows no resistance; works sweetly, and yet strongly; it can come into the heart, whereas all

other speakers are forced to stand without. That still voice within persuades more than all the loud crying without; as he that is within the house, though he speak low, is better heard and understood than he that shouts without doors.

When the Lord himself speaks by this his Spirit to a man, selecting and calling him out of the lost world, he can no more disobey than Abraham did, when the Lord spoke to him after an extraordinary manner, to depart from his own country and kindred: *Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him*, Gen. xii. 4. There is a secret, but very powerful, virtue in a word, or look, or touch of this Spirit upon the soul, by which it is forced, not with a harsh, but a pleasing violence, and cannot choose but follow it, not unlike that of Elijah's mantle upon Elisha. How easily did the disciples forsake their callings and their dwellings to follow Christ!

The Spirit of God draws a man out of the world by a sanctified light sent into his mind; 1. Discovering to him, how base and false the sweetness of sin is, which withholds men and amuses them, that they return not; and how true and sad the bitterness is that will follow upon it; 2. Setting before his eyes the free and happy condition, *the glorious liberty of the sons of God*, the riches of their present enjoyment, and their far larger and assured hopes for hereafter; 3. Making the beauty of Jesus Christ visible to the soul; which straightway takes it so, that it cannot be stayed from coming to him, though its most beloved friends, most beloved sins, lie in the way, and hang about it, and cry, Will you leave us so? It will tread upon all to come within the embraces of Jesus Christ, and say with St. Paul, *I was not disobedient to (or unpersuaded by) the heavenly vision.*

LEIGHTON.

Reflect on what the Scripture calls *a stony heart*, a darkened understanding, a will enslaved by sin, and a man dead in trespasses. Consider the Scripture, which says, God himself must raise him, regenerate him, give him a heart of flesh, and write his law, with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart, 2 Cor. iii. 3; and you will easily understand, that where there is conversion, there is the work, not of man, but of the Holy Spirit, the triumph of the grace of God.

The natural man in a state of sin, is no more disposed in himself to receive the impression of God, and the renewal of his image, than the dust is to become a living and organised body. It must not be said that this is exaggerated. It is by no means. Try the effect of every power in nature upon corrupt man, upon this cold, lifeless lump of earth, and you will never give him spiritual life, and make him a new creature. Teach him philosophy, the principles of legislation, the precepts of Moses; let parents and masters come with their instructions; let even all the preachers urge their exhortations, their promises, and their threats; they will never form the new creature, unless God himself should come, and work upon this clod by his almighty and immediate operation, and create the new man and the new spirit.

Moreover, the natural man, far from being disposed to become a new creature, has a direct contrary tendency. In the creation of the world, there was nothing to resist, nothing to contend with the Creator. In the formation of man, the dust, which he was willing to dignify so highly, made no resistance; how indeed could the earth say, 'Why hast thou made me thus?' But in the work of conversion, this vile dust is rebellious against its Creator, and is in arms against him, who intends to form it a vessel unto honor. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, 'What makest thou?' When God says, *I will*, there is something in man, which answers, *I will not*.

To make us new creatures, his grace must triumph over our resistance, and render our rebellious will docile and obedient.

The change that takes place in conversion, is very great both in itself, and in its effects. A slight change would be undeserving the name of a new creation. If it consisted in making an outward show only, in a pharisaical or hypocritical righteousness, or in behaving like decent worldly people; in attaining to the virtue of philosophers, or even the state of many professing Christians; such changes would by no means deserve the name of a *new creature*; all these would signify very little. It was not needful for such purposes only, that the Son of God should leave Heaven, that he should come, and languish in misery, and die upon the cross;

it was not necessary that the Holy Ghos should appear in the form of fiery tongues, and that Jesus Christ should work so many miracles to establish the Gospel. Neither would it be necessary for God to display the whole efficacy of his grace. Human motives, civil regulations, may produce in some degree a change in our moral conduct; but there is a wide difference between *the new creature* and philosophical virtue, or morality. A life which is regulated by human principles only, is still the old Adam, who is well acquainted with the method of concealing his wrinkles with paint, and his deformity under an apparently beautiful mask. If you have human virtues only, I must still tell you, One thing thou lackest. What do I say? Thou hast nothing, thou lackest every thing.

But further: To have some relish for heavenly things, transient desires to lead a godly life, to abstain from certain sins, to weep sometimes on account of transgressions, or to get the better of certain passions; all these are far from being sufficient to form the new creature.

SUPERVILLE.

In order to correct dangerous mistakes, arising from that conceit which men generally entertain of their own ability to do good, it is necessary to show that this spiritual renovation is not to be produced by any human efforts, and that we are, as to this point, 'without strength.' When Christians are described as being regenerate, it is expressly declared, without excepting any who may be thought to possess in themselves greater power or virtue than others, *They were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man*, John i. 13. Their excellence of character and disposition is not what they brought into the world with them, or derived from their ancestry, however eminent in goodness; but it results entirely from that change, which has been wrought in them, not by any virtuous inclinations, resolutions, or efforts, within the compass of their corrupt nature, nor by the persuasions of friends, or teachers, but by a superior and more powerful influence.

This conclusion indeed might be drawn from the figurative descriptions given of it: for they lead us to infer, that the interposition of an almighty agent is absolutely requisite. It would be an extreme

absurdity to talk of any creature being the cause of its own birth, or the author of its own existence: it would be a folly too gross to be tolerated, to represent a lifeless corpse as having within itself a power of recovering its former animation and vigor. In these metaphors, then, of Regeneration, new Creation, and spiritual Resurrection, man's total inability to restore himself to his original righteousness is necessarily implied.

But the same thing is also manifest, without a figure, from the state of our hearts. There is in our very nature a strong and continual propensity to evil, a fixed and rooted love of sin and hatred of all holiness. How is this to be removed? That we should give ourselves different principles, or cordially desire a real and entire purity of mind, is contrary to the supposition of our depravity. *The carnal mind is enmity against God*: of itself therefore it will never submit, but obstinately persist in its rebellion. *It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. viii. 7. This impossibility of producing such a subjection of the soul to God, as is included in regeneration, must remain till some foreign influence be exerted. This impossibility, however, is no other than man's determined adherence to sin and opposition to God, which constitute not his excuse but his guilt, and will be the ground of his condemnation. It is not to be inferred that he vehemently desires to be good, and is restrained from executing his pious purposes by some extrinsic force; but the true state of the case is, 'He HATETH to be reformed,'—'He WILL NOT turn, nor fear God.'

But here we behold the display of sovereign mercy. The Lord himself interposes, and by his new-creating power restores his image in the soul. For the sake of his beloved Son, who mediates on our behalf, he is ready to bestow his efficacious grace, and does actually confer the blessing upon all his redeemed people. Such is his own promise, *A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. This subject, we doubt not, was understood, both as a doctrine and as a matter of experience, under the ancient dispensations of the Old Testament; but as a larger effusion of the Spirit was reserved for the times of the Gospel, we might expect that in the New Testament

it would be treated in a more clear and explicit manner. Accordingly, in almost every page our attention is directed to the necessity of a divine influence for the renovation of the soul. To be *born again*, and to be *born of God*, and *of the Spirit*, are in these Scriptures continually used as synonymous terms; from which the inference is undeniable, that God the Spirit is the Author of the change, John i. 13. iii. 3. 5. 1 John iii. 9. v. 1. 4. Such is the confession of faith delivered by primitive Christians, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour*, Titus iii. 5, 6. Here, as in many other passages, the three Persons of the Godhead are introduced as uniting in the same gracious plan, and our salvation is said to result from their joint interposition: but the alteration produced in the state of our minds is ascribed solely to the agency of the Spirit; it is *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*; who, as our Church expresses it, is 'the Lord and Giver of life.' (Nicene Creed.)

REV. T. ROBINSON.

A reply to the question, Is Man a mere machine?

BUT, say some, who understand not these spiritual and experimental truths; 'Are we then but mere machines, acting only as we are acted upon, without any proper volition or determination of our own?'

Nobody asks this question in relation to our bodies, in which the principles of action are far more apparent to our senses; and yet surely they cannot be supposed to be greater objects of Divine direction than are our souls. We see, we taste, we smell, we feel, we digest our food, or rather our food is digested in us, our blood circulates, our lungs vibrate, and an inscrutable chemistry is momentarily carrying on throughout our frame; and all this confessedly by the action of God, through the medium of material agents, without any appeal to our will, and generally as much without our attention, as the mode of operation is above our knowledge. This is kept up when we sleep, not less than in our waking hours; in abstraction of thought from the ideal world, as in the most intense applications of our faculties to the substances of matter; when we are engaged

in a variety of affairs about us, as when we direct our closest reflections immediately upon ourselves. But will any man say, that he has any share in ordering and supporting this wonderful mechanism, or that it is an automaton raised by himself? The Divine power ordained the faculty, and gives the consciousness, of sight: our wills were not consulted, whether we should have this sense; or, now we have it, whether it shall be affected or not. We taste our food: but can we, if we would, reject the organ by which we taste, or alter the mode of its sensation? We hear the sounds about us: but, is not the impression from without, and is not the perception within entirely independent of our volition? We feel a variety of motions through all our animal frame, not asking our leave or our wisdom to move; some circulating the pleasures of health and strength, and others compelling us to endure the sad reverse: and do we consider ourselves as absolute and unintelligent machines, notwithstanding these impressions of a superior power? or is it rather proper to a senseless machine, than to a living creature, not to be independent of a supreme agent, or not to be capable of resisting his supreme operations? But if, in the faculties of the body, we are thus acted upon, as we undoubtedly are, by the medium or instrumentality of the gross substances about us, as often without and above, as with our consent; and if God perform all this in us and in others, for the final accomplishment of his providential designs;* who can presume to say,

* It was a great concession for a man of Abp. Tillotson's persuasion, and extorted no doubt by the force of truth, to say, 'God is the fountain and original of all power, from whom it is derived, and upon whom it depends, and to whom it is perfectly subject and subordinate. He can do all things at once and in an instant, and with the greatest ease; and no created power can put any difficulty in his way, much less make any effectual resistance; because Omnipotence can check, and countermand, and bear down before it all other powers.' And again, 'The true reason of these things lies much deeper, in the secret providence of Almighty God, who when he pleaseth can so govern and overrule both the understandings and the wills of men, as shall best serve his own wise purpose and design.'—Serm. before the King and Queen, ix. and x. pp. 12, and 6. Solomon says, *the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will*, Prov. xxi. 1. If the heart of kings be thus in the hand of the Lord, 'ruled and governed, disposed and turned, as it seemeth best to his godly wisdom;' it implies most strongly, that no other man's heart can be out of it.

that, in the more sublime and spiritual properties of the mind, which are so much more congenial with himself than matter can be, the same Almighty agent doth not begin, sustain, and carry on those mental impressions and activities, which, under the name of grace, constitute the very life, peace, wisdom, strength, experience, and ultimate expectation of the soul? Who can venture to deny that God is the Alpha and Omega of his people's faith and salvation, wrought in them and for them; when he himself, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, hath been pleased to affirm that he is? How he doeth this is another question, which we can no more define than we can define the mode of his operation upon those gross substances our bodies: it is sufficient for us to know, that it is done, and that he doeth it; or, in other words which are his own, that *in him we live, and move* (or, *are moved*), *and have our being*. Were it otherwise, we could not be a part of his creation, either natural or divine. But will any one presume to say, that all this is making us, or the angels above us, dull machines, without life or consciousness?

Moreover; his providence hath established natural means, put them within our natural reach, and given us natural powers to use them. By this providence, we can read and hear his word; attend his ordinances, and wait at the gates of wisdom. We can be in the way, like Abraham's servant; and, being there, may expect, with him, that the Lord will meet us. Out of the way, we have assurances of nothing but evil.

I have said all this to obviate a common cavil, which, after all, can only be fully answered to a man's mind by the instruction of him, *who worketh* in every believer *both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*. When the soul is converted to God, the wisdom and experience obtained in that conversion will teach and convince more in one moment, than the ablest human lessons in the world. And, unless such conversion do take place, could the mind be convinced by any arguments or representations, they would be but of little weight or consequence to the person's present peace or conduct, and still less to his everlasting welfare.

God worketh upon his people's souls by his wisdom and truth, which in them are ever accompanied by the energies of his

mighty power, Eph. i. 19. *In the day or time of this power, they are made willing, or willingness itself, in the abstract, as the original implies, Ps. cx. 3. Not by brutal force (as some have talked), nor yet by mere moral suasion (as others have dreamed); but by giving life to the dead, by bringing the prisoners out of the prison-house, by bestowing sight upon the blind, and in a word, by creating all things new.*

SERLE.

Regard of God for His own Image in the renewed soul.

THIS divine life begun and kindled in any heart, wheresoever it be, is something of God in flesh, and, in a sober and qualified sense, divinity incarnate; and all particular Christians that are really possessed of it, so many mystical Christs.

And God forbid that God's own life and nature here in the world should be forlorn, forsaken, and abandoned of God himself. Certainly wherever it is, though never so little, like a sweet, young, tender babe, once born in any heart, when it crieth unto God the Father of it, with pitiful and bemoaning looks imploring his compassion, it cannot choose but move his fatherly bowels, and make them yearn, and turn towards it, and by strong sympathy draw his compassionate arm to help and relieve it. Never was any tender infant so dear to those bowels that begot it, as an infant new-born Christ, formed in the heart of any true believer, to God the Father of it. Shall *the children of this world, the sons of darkness*, be moved with such tender affection and compassion towards the fruit of their bodies, their own natural offspring? and shall God, who is the *Father of lights*, the Fountain of all goodness, be moved with no compassion towards his true spiritual offspring, and have no regard to those sweet babes of light engendered by his own beams in men's hearts, that in their lovely countenances bear the resemblance of his own face, and call him their Father? Shall he see them lie fainting, and gasping, and dying here in the world, for want of nothing to preserve and keep them but an influence from him who first gave them life and breath? No; hear the language of God's heart; hear the sounding of his bowels towards them: *Is it Ephraim, my dear son? Is it that pleasant child? Since I spake of him, I do earnestly remember*

him; my bowels, my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. If those expressions of goodness and tender affection here among the creatures be but drops of that full ocean that is in God, how can we then imagine that this Father of our spirits should have so little regard to his own dear offspring, I do not say our souls, but that which is the very life and soul of our souls, the life of God in us, (which is nothing else but God's own self communicated to us, his own Son born in our hearts,) as that he should suffer it to be cruelly murdered in its infancy by our sins, and, like young Hercules, in its very cradle to be strangled by those filthy vipers? that he should see him to be crucified by wicked lusts, nailed fast to the cross by invincible corruptions, pierced and gored on every side with the poisoned spears of the devil's temptations, and at last to give up the ghost; and yet his tender heart not at all relent, nor be all this while impassioned with so sad a spectacle? Surely we cannot think he hath such an adamant breast, such a flinty nature as this is?

CUDWORTH.

Unregenerate Men must labor to be Regenerate.

BEWARE that you do not flatter yourselves with any deluding hopes of heaven; you are as yet without any right to it. This is indeed a dreadful caution—what! to beat men off from their hopes of heaven? And commonly it proves as fruitless as it is dreadful; men's hopes of all things frequently deceive them; they maintain themselves with little, especially the hopes they have of heaven, and they live either upon weak probabilities, or upon strong fancies; and hence the Scripture compares the hope of a hypocrite to a spider's web, Job viii. 14. Men spin out their hopes out of their own bowels, and settle themselves in the midst of them, and doubt not but they shall catch heaven itself in their foolish cobwebs. Should I come and ask you all one by one, Do you, and you, hope to be saved? Where is the person that would not by his disdain at the very question testify how high and how great his hopes are? Would not the drunkard, the swearer, the profane person, and the whole rabble of wicked and ungodly wretches, speak as confidently of their

salvation, as if they were born with sure proofs of heaven in their hands? What, are these men regenerate? Or is the price of heaven fallen, and God become willing to part with it on lower terms than the new birth? Art thou regenerated, that hatest God and Godliness, and all those that bear the least resemblance to the divine purity? Art thou regenerated, that makest an impudent scoff at the name, and deridest the very title that fallen man hath unto happiness? Is it likely that the new nature should be hid under an old life? Regeneration is the ransacking of the soul, the turning of a man out of himself, the crumbling to pieces of the old man, and the new-moulding of it into another shape; it is the turning of stones into children, and a drawing of the lively portraiture of Jesus Christ upon that very table that before represented only the very image of the devil. This mighty change is wrought by regeneration; man's partaking of the Divine Nature is the greatest change that ever was wrought in heaven or in earth, unless it were God's partaking of the humane nature. Why now, art thou thus changed? Are all old things done away, and all things in thee become new? Hast thou a new heart and renewed affections? And dost thou serve God in newness of life and conversation? If not, what hast thou to do with hopes of Heaven? Thou art yet without Christ, and so consequently without hope. Sinners, what is it that you trust to? Is it your own good works? This is indeed the common refuge of those that have fewest good works to produce; but, alas, what confidence canst thou repose in these, when *the very prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord*? Is it the merit of Christ that you rely upon? Why, Christ becomes a Saviour to none but to those in whose hearts he is first formed. Is it some slight and general notions of God's mercy that you trust to? It is true, God is infinitely merciful, though he hath already damned thousands for their sins; and he will remain for ever infinitely merciful, when thou also art damned among them. It is in vain to press the mercy of God to serve your foolish hopes against that inviolable truth of his, that hath excluded you out of Heaven; except you be *born again, you can in no wise enter into the kingdom of God*. This is that irreversible sentence that is written on Heaven's gates—no entering there, but by pass-

ing first through the new birth; no dogs nor swine must come into that holy city; and such are all unrenewed persons; yea, the Scripture calls them the children of the Devil; *Ye are of your father the Devil*, John viii. 40. And certainly, that God who hath chased devils out of Heaven, will never admit any of his rude offspring into it. And therefore let me exhort you not to flatter yourselves into hell and destruction with false and deluding hopes of Heaven.

Secondly, *Give no rest either to God, or to yourselves, till this thorough change be wrought upon you in your regeneration*.

It is of absolute necessity unto eternal salvation; and unless you think that salvation itself is not of absolute necessity, what can be the reason that you trifle and dally in that which is of so vast a concernment? What is it that you can plead for yourselves? Is it that it is not within the compass of your power to regenerate yourselves? It is true: but although you cannot form this new nature in you, why do you not yet do your utmost to prepare and dispose yourselves to receive it? Though we are all lamed and crippled by our fall which we took in Adam, yet, such cripples as we are, may notwithstanding make shift to get into that way by which Christ useth to pass, and may possibly be healed by him. It is a sure rule, *Though God is not bound to give Grace upon men's endeavors, yet neither is he wont to deny it*. Do you expect that this change, like that of the surviving saints at the last day, should pass upon you ere you are aware of it, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye? It is true, man's change of heart is the greatest miracle that God works in the world; but yet he works it in an ordinary way, by our own endeavors as well as by his own irresistible and victorious grace; and therefore God calls upon us, Ezek. xviii. 31, *Make you a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will you die?* Do not therefore cheat your souls into eternal perdition by such lazy conceits of your own weakness and impotency; do not content yourselves with a few yawning drowsy wishes, expecting till divine grace doth of its own self drop down out of Heaven, and of its own accord change your hearts; possibly before that time you yourselves may irrecoverably drop into hell: will you lose your souls for ever, only out of a

wretched sloth? Doth one end of them lie burning as a brand in hell fire, and will you not stretch out your hand to pluck it thence? Believe it, as long as you continue in a sinful state, you are wrapt about with ten thousand curses, the wrath of God is continually making its approaches unto you, and there is only a thin mud wall of flesh to fence it out, which is still mouldering and falling away, and whether it will be able to hold out one day longer you know not: you hang over the bottomless pit only by the weak thread of a frail life, which is ready to be snapt asunder every moment; and if some consuming sickness should fret this thread, or some unforeseen casualty should break it off suddenly; if death work a change upon you before grace works a change in you, of all God's creation you are the most miserable; better that you had been the most loathsome creature that crawls upon God's earth, yea, better that you had never been, than that you should forget and neglect this great work of renovation one moment too long: therefore use no delay; every moment that is not this present, is too long a delay: while you are dreaming of repentance and converting some months, or possibly some years hence, God may snatch you away before the next sand is run in time's glass; and where are you then? *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation*: whatever is not now, may be too late; and ere that time comes that you have prefixed to yourselves, God may set up your souls as flaming monuments of his displeasure, justice, and severity, in hell for ever.

If you ask me what you shall do to be renewed? I answer, the directions are not many; take only these two.

First, *Be instant with God by prayer, that he would by his Omnipotent Grace new-create you to himself, and stamp again upon you his effaced image.* There is a prevalency in the prayer of a mere natural man when he prays for grace; else St. Peter would never have exhorted Simon Magus, who was in the *gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, to pray that so the thought of his heart might be forgiven him.*

Secondly, *Improve diligently all the means of regeneration, whereof the Word is the chief.* Of his own will begat he us by the Word of Truth, says the Apostle, James i. 18. Attend it constantly, medi-

tate upon it frequently, endeavor faithfully to practise it; this hath been the way in all ages that hath proved successful for the bringing in of sinners unto God: Heaven is full of happy souls that hath been fitted for that glorious estate, by such very ordinances as these are that now you set under. It is true, these are not of themselves a sufficient means; alas, what is the weak breath of a poor man to make impressions upon hearts that are harder than the *nether mill-stones*? What can we do to give sight to the blind, and life to the dead, but only God who demolished the walls of Jericho by the sound of a few rams' horns, doth likewise make use of the preaching of the Gospel to demolish the strong holds of Satan, which would have been as impertinent and as insignificant a sound as that was, had not God put his institution upon it, and his Spirit into it? Wait upon the ordinances therefore, that that happy soul-saving word may at length be spoken that may cause thee to arise, and to stand up from the dead; endeavor to do whatever lies in thy power in order to thy regeneration: it is true, it is not in our power to make ourselves new creatures; but when God sees thee conscientiously improving that power that thou hast, he will then give thee that power that thou wantest. Never yet was there an instance of any that did vigorously to their utmost labor after grace, that did not also leave some good evidences behind them that they did obtain it; and certainly thou hast no reason to think that God will make thee the first instance and president. So much for this time, and for this subject.

BP. HOPKINS.

Though the Regenerate Man is subject to the law of Sin, yet he is at constant warfare with it.

If you have understood these things, and find corruption in you, and can talk never so well of its various contentions and workings; that will not prove you to have grace in your heart, and to be a regenerate soul: there may be much light in the understanding, and that may beget a great stir in the conscience, when, nevertheless, there is no change wrought on the will and affections. Wherefore, you should consider, that, while the Apostle here describes a regenerate person as having much sin, and corruption, and that but too apt to gain some advantages upon

him; he does at the same time set him out, as having a will to do good, as hating evil, as delighting in the law of God in the inner man, as warring against the law of sin in his members, as groaning under it as the most heavy and intolerable burden. Now, not one of these things is the case of an unregenerate man; no, not with the highest measure of light in his understanding, or the most reproving pangs of guilt in his conscience. Such cannot say, they have a will to do good, and hate evil; that they delight in the law of God in the inner man; or, that they penitently groan under the body of sin. And this matter should be much noted; for when people have heard a great deal of the spirituality of the law, and of the corruption of their own nature, which you know is your case, and are grown up to some degree of acquaintance with these points, they may be apt to stop short of conversion; and that especially, if, as is mostly the case, what has been heard about the Law and the Gospel has produced some awakenings of conscience, and they find some outward reformation and profession; wherefore we should make full proof of a real change wrought upon us, through faith in Jesus Christ. How shall we do this? The answer is, you may try yourself, whether you be in the faith stated by the Apostle, in the passage before us, Rom. vii. 14. ad ult.; in order to which you will take notice, that here are represented the struggles between grace and nature in a regenerate soul. In relating this conflict, two contrary principles are brought before you, as both dwelling in the regenerate; which he expresses by two, that is, his natural and renewed self, which as two persons of different characters are dwelling in him. Concerning his renewed self, he says, that he habitually and determinately consented to the law that it is good, delighted in it after the inner man, served it with his mind, and consequently

disallowed and hated the evil that he did. Yet, at the same time, he confesses concerning his natural self, that he was carnal, and sold under sin, brought into captivity by the law of his members, and served the law of sin with the flesh. Is there any contradiction here? No. It must be thus, while two such different principles as grace and sin dwell together. When we talk of a Christian, we are wont to conceive a perfect character; when we talk *with* him, we find him the very thing here described; a person in whom the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The question is not, whether I am perfect, but whether I am regenerate? and so, not whether I have no corruption in me, but whether I have grace in me, warring against corruption, and in the general course overcoming it? How shall I know that, you will say? I find that the good I would do, I do not; and again, that the evil, which I would not do, I too often do; and this makes me doubt my conversion. But do you really find this? What, do you really find you would do, with all your soul, the good you do not, and so would not do the evil you do? Then it is plain God has given you a will; and in that case, I dare answer for you, you can say also, you consent to the law that is good, and delight in it in the inner man, and serve it with the mind: and beyond these expressions, rightly understood, I know none more eminently descriptive of a gracious state in the whole Scriptures. Take this passage into the nearest consideration. Have you the complaints of the regenerate man here described? that is no ill token. But can you adopt too his dispositions and conduct? then it is manifest you cannot be mistaken; and by the way, it looks to me as if the Spirit had designed this passage for the relief of tender and doubting minds. REV. SAM. WALKER.

SECTION IX.—ON THE SACRAMENTS.

On the Efficacy of the Two Sacraments.

It greatly offendeth, that some, when they labor to show the use of the Holy Sacraments, assign unto them no end but only to teach the mind, by other senses, that which the word doth teach by hear-

ing. Whereupon, how easily neglect and careless regard of so heavenly mysteries may follow, we see in part by some experience had of those men with whom that opinion is most strong. For where the word of God may be heard, which teacheth with much more expedition, and more

full explications, any thing we have to learn; if all the benefit we reap by sacraments be instruction, they which at all times have opportunity of using the better mean to that purpose, will surely hold the worse in less estimation. And unto infants which are not capable of instruction, who would not think it a mere superfluity, that any sacrament is administered, if to administer the sacraments be but to teach receivers what God doth for them? There is of sacraments therefore, undoubtedly, some other more excellent and heavenly use. Sacraments, by reason of their mixed nature, are more diversely interpreted and disputed of, than any other parts of religion besides; for that in so great store of properties belonging to the self-same thing, as every man's wit hath taken hold of some especial consideration above the rest, so they have accordingly seemed one to cross another, as touching their several opinions about the necessity of sacraments; whereas in truth their disagreement is not great. For, let respect be had to the duty which every communicant doth undertake, and we may well determine concerning the use of sacraments, that they serve as bonds of obedience to God, strict obligations to the mutual exercise of Christian charity, provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, memorials of the principal benefits of Christ; respect the time of their institution, and it thereby appeareth, that God hath annexed them for ever unto the New Testament, as other rites were before with the Old; regard the weakness which is in us, and they are warrants for the more security of our belief; compare the receivers of them with such as receive them not, and sacraments are marks of distinction to separate God's own from strangers: so that in all these respects, they are found to be most necessary. But their chiefest force and virtue consisteth not herein so much, as in that they are heavenly ceremonies, which God hath sanctified and ordained to be administered in his church: first, as marks whereby to know when God doth impart the vital or saving grace of Christ unto all that are capable thereof; and, secondly, as means conditional, which God requireth in them unto whom he imparteth grace. For, since God in himself is invisible, and cannot by us be discerned working; therefore when it seemeth good in the eyes of his heavenly wisdom, that men, for some special intent and purpose,

should take notice of his glorious presence, he giveth them some plain and sensible token whereby to know what they cannot see. For Moses to see God and live, was impossible; yet Moses, by fire, knew where the glory of God extraordinarily was present. The angel, by whom God endued the waters of the pool, called Bethesda, with supernatural virtue to heal, was not seen of any; yet the time of the angel's presence known by the troubled motions of the waters themselves. The Apostles, by fiery tongues which they saw, were admonished when the Spirit, which they could not behold, was upon them: in like manner it is with us. Christ and his holy Spirit with all their blessed effects, though entering into the soul of man we are not able to apprehend or express how, do notwithstanding give notice of the times when they use to make their access, because it pleaseth Almighty God to communicate by sensible means those blessings which are incomprehensible. Seeing therefore that grace is a consequent of sacraments, a thing which accompanieth them as their end, a benefit which they have received from God himself the author of sacraments, and not from any other natural or supernatural quality in them; it may be hereby both understood, that sacraments are necessary, and that the manner of their necessity to life supernatural is not in all respects as food unto natural life, because they contain in themselves no vital force or efficacy: they are not physical, but moral instruments of salvation, duties of service and worship; which unless we perform as the Author of grace requirerth, they are unprofitable. For, all receive not the grace of God, which receive the sacraments of his grace. Neither is it ordinarily his will to bestow the grace of sacraments on any, but by the sacraments; which grace also, they that receive by sacraments or with sacraments, receive it from him, and not from them. For of sacraments, the very same is true which Solomon's wisdom observeth in the brazen serpent, *He that turned towards it, was not healed by the thing he saw, but by thee, O Saviour of all.* This is therefore the necessity of sacraments: That saving grace which Christ originally is, or hath for the general good of his whole church, by sacraments he severally deriveth into every member thereof. Sacraments serve

as the instruments of God, to that end and purpose: moral instruments, the use whereof is in our own hands, the effect in his; for the use, we have his express commandment; for the effect, his conditional promise: so that without our obedience to the one, there is of the other no apparent assurance; as contrariwise, where the signs and sacraments of his grace are not either through contempt unreceived, or received with contempt, we are not to doubt, but that they really give what they promise, and are what they signify. For we take not Baptism, nor the Eucharist, for bare resemblances or memorials of things absent, neither for naked signs and testimonies assuring us of grace received before, but (as they are indeed and in verity) for means effectual, whereby God, when we take the sacraments, delivereth into our hands that grace available unto eternal life, which grace the sacraments represent or signify. There have grown in the doctrine concerning sacraments many difficulties for want of distinct explication, what kind or degree of grace doth belong unto each sacrament. For by this it hath come to pass, that the true immediate cause why Baptism, and why the Supper of our Lord is necessary, few do rightly and distinctly consider. It cannot be denied, but sundry the same effects and benefits which grow unto men by the one sacrament, may rightly be attributed unto the other. Yet then doth Baptism challenge to itself but the inchoation of those graces, the consummation whereof dependeth on mysteries ensuing. We receive Christ Jesus in Baptism once, as the first beginner; in the Eucharist often, as being, by continual degrees, the finisher of our life. By Baptism therefore we receive Christ Jesus; and from him that saving grace which is proper unto baptism. By the other sacrament we receive him also, imparting therein himself, and that grace which the Eucharist properly bestoweth. So that each sacrament having both that which is general or common, and that also which is peculiar unto itself, we may hereby gather, that the participation of Christ, which properly belongeth to any one sacrament, is not otherwise to be obtained, but by the sacrament whereunto it is proper.

HOOKE.

There are two extremes to be avoided

in this matter: the one is of the Church of Rome, that teaches, that as some sacraments imprint a character upon the soul, which they define to be a physical quality, that is, supernatural and spiritual; so they do all carry along with them such a divine virtue, that by the very receiving them (the *opus operatum*) it is conveyed to the souls of those to whom they are applied, unless they themselves put a bar in the way of it by some mortal sin. In consequence of this, they reckon that by the sacraments given to a man in his agonies, though he is very near past all sense, and so cannot join any lively acts of his mind with the sacraments, yet he is justified: not to mention the common practice of giving extreme unction in the last agony, when no appearance of any sense is left. This we reckon a doctrine that is not only without all foundation in Scripture, but that tends to destroy all religion, and to make men live on securely in sin, trusting to this, that the sacraments may be given them when they die. The conditions of the New Covenant are repentance, faith, and obedience; and we look on this as the corrupting the vitals of this religion, when any such means are proposed, by which the main design of the Gospel is quite overthrown. The business of a character is an unintelligible notion. We acknowledge baptism is not to be repeated; but that is not by virtue of a character imprinted in it, but because it being a dedication of the person to God in the Christian religion, what is once so done, is to be understood to continue still in that state, till such a person falls into an open apostasy. In case of the repentance of such a person, we, finding that the primitive Church did reconcile, but not rebaptise apostates, do imitate that their practice; but not because of this late and unexplicable notion of a character. We look on all sacramental actions as acceptable to God only with regard to the temper, and the inward acts of the person to whom they are applied, and cannot consider them as medicines or charms, which work by a virtue of their own, whether the person to whom they are applied co-operates with them, or not. Baptism is said by St. Peter to *save us*, not as it is an action that washes us; *not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And therefore baptism without this pro-

fession, is no baptism, but seems to be used as a charm, unless it is said, that this answer or profession is implied whenever baptism is desired. When a person of age desires baptism, he must make those answers and sponsions, otherwise he is not truly baptised; and though this outward making of them being all that can fall under human cognisance, he who does that must be held to be truly baptised, and all the outward privileges of a baptised person must belong to him; yet as to the effect of baptism on the soul of him that is baptised, without doubt that depends upon the sincerity of the professions and vows made by him. The wills of infants are by the law of nature and nations in their parents, and are transferred by them to their surties. The sponsions that are made on their behalf are considered as made by themselves: but there the outward act is sufficient; for the inward acts of one person cannot be supposed necessary to give the sacrament its virtue in another.

In the Eucharist, by *our showing forth our Lord's death till he comes*, 1 Cor. x. 16., we are admitted to the *communion of his body and blood*; to a share in partnership with other Christians in the effects and merits of his death. But the unworthy receiver is guilty of his body and blood, and brings thereby down judgments upon himself. So that to fancy a virtue in sacraments that works on the person to whom they are applied without any inward acts accompanying it, and upon his being only passive, is a doctrine of which we find nothing in the Scriptures; which teach us that every thing we do is only accepted of God, with regard to the disposition of mind that he knows us to be in when we go about it. Our prayers and sacrifices are so far from being accepted of God, that they are *abomination* to him, if they came from wicked and defiled hearts. The making men believe that

sacraments may be effectual to them when they are next to a state of passivity, not capable of any sensible thoughts of their own, is a sure way to raise the credit of the clergy, and of the sacrament; but at the same time it will most certainly dispose men to live in sin, hoping that a few rites, which may be easily procured at their death, will clear all at last. And thus we reject, not without great zeal against the fatal effects of this error, all that is said of the *opus operatum*, the very doing of the sacrament: we think it looks liker the incantations of heathenism, than the purity and simplicity of the Christian religion.

But the other extreme, that we likewise avoid, is that of sinking the sacraments so low, as to be mere rites and ceremonies. St. Peter says, *Baptism saves us*, Tit. iii. 5. St. Paul calls it, *the laver of regeneration*; Mar. xvi. 16. to which he joins the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, John iii. 3. 5. Our Saviour saith, *He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved*: and, *Except ye are born again of water, and of the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God*. These words have a sense and signification that rises far above a mere ceremony done to keep up order, and to maintain a settled form. The phrase, *communion of the body and blood of Christ*, is above the nature of an anniversary or memorial feast. This opinion we think is very unsuitable to those high expressions; and we do not doubt but that Christ, who instituted those sacraments, does still accompany them with a particular presence in them, and a blessing upon them; so that we coming to them with minds well prepared, with pure affections and holy resolutions, do certainly receive in and with them particular largesses of the favor and bounty of God. They are not bare and naked remembrances and tokens; but are actuated and animated by a divine blessing that attends upon them.

BP. BURNET.

SECTION X.—ON BAPTISM.

The Design of Baptism.

IF Baptism were only the receiving us into the society of Christians, there were no need of saying, *I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. It were more proper

to say, *I baptise thee in the name, or by the authority of the Church*. Therefore these august words, that were dictated by our Lord himself, show us that there is somewhat in it that is internal, which comes from God; that it is an admitting men into somewhat that depends only on

God, and for the giving of which the authority can only be derived by him. But after all, this is not to be believed to be of the nature of a charm, as if the very act of baptism carried always with it an inward regeneration. Here we must confess, that very early some doctrines arose upon baptism, that we cannot be determined by. The words of our Saviour to Nicodemus were expounded so, as to import the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation: for it not being observed that the dispensation of the Messiah was meant by the kingdom of God, but it being taken to signify eternal glory, that expression of our Saviour's was understood to import this, that no man could be saved unless he were baptised; so it was believed to be simply necessary to salvation. A natural consequence that followed upon that, was to allow all persons leave to baptise, clergy and laity, men and women, since it seemed necessary to suffer every person to do that without which salvation could not be had. Upon this, these hasty baptisms were used, without any special sponson on the part of those who desired it; of which it may be reasonably doubted whether such a baptism be true, in which no sponson is made: and this cannot be well answered but by saying, that a general and an implied sponson is to be considered to be made by their parents while they desire them to be baptised.

Another opinion that arose out of the former, was the mixing of the outward and the inward effects of baptism; it being believed that every person that was *born of the Water*, was also *born of the Spirit*; and that the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, did always accompany the *washing of Regeneration*. And this obliged St. Austin (as was formerly told) to make that difference between the *regenerate* and the *predestinated*; for he thought that all who were baptised, were also regenerated. St. Peter has stated this so fully, that if his words are well considered, they will clear the whole matter. He, after he had set forth the miserable state in which mankind was, under the figure of the Deluge, in which an ark was prepared for Noah and his family, says upon that, *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Upon which he makes a short digression to explain the nature of baptism, *Not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer (or*

the demand and interrogation) of a good conscience towards God; by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into Heaven. The meaning of all which is, that Christ having risen again, and having then had *all power in Heaven and in Earth* given to him, he had put that virtue in baptism, that by it we are *saved*, as in an ark, from that miserable state in which the world lies, and in which it must perish. But then he explains the way how it saves us; that it is not as a physical action, as it washes away the filthiness of the flesh, or the body; like the notion that the Gentiles might have of their *Februations*; or, which is more natural, considering to whom he writes, like the opinions that the Jews had of their *cleansings* after their *legal impurities*, from which their washings and bathings did absolutely free them. The salvation that we Christians have by baptism is effected by that federation into which we enter, when upon the demands that are made of our renouncing the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, and of our believing in Christ, and our *repentance* towards God, we make such *answers* from a *good conscience*, as agree with the end and design of baptism; then by our thus coming into covenant with God, we are saved in baptism. So that the salvation by baptism is given by reason of the federal compact that is made in it. Now this being made outwardly, according to the rules that are prescribed, that must make the baptism good among men, as to all the outward and visible effects of it: but since it is the *answer of a good conscience* only that *saves*, then an answer from a bad conscience, from a hypocritical person, who does not inwardly think or purpose according to what he professes outwardly, cannot save; but does on the contrary aggravate his damnation. Therefore our article puts the efficacy of baptism, in order to the forgiveness of our sins, and to our adoption and salvation, upon the virtue of prayer to God; that is, upon those vows, and other acts of devotion that accompany them: so that when the seriousness of the mind accompanies the regularity of the action, then both the outward and inward effects of baptism are attained by it; and we are not only *baptised into one body*, but are also *saved by baptism*. So that upon the whole matter, baptism is a federal admission into Chris-

tianity; in which, on God's part, all the blessings of the Gospel are made over to the baptised: and on the other hand, the person baptised takes on him, by a solemn profession and vow, to observe and adhere to the whole Christian religion. So it is a very natural distinction to say, that the outward effects of baptism follow it as outwardly performed; but that the inward effects of it follow upon the inward acts. But this difference is still to be observed between inward acts and outward actions; that when the outward action is rightly performed, the Church must reckon the baptism good, and never renew it: but if one has been wanting in the inward acts, those may be afterwards renewed, and that want may be made up by repentance.

BP. BURNET.

The Power and Virtue of Baptism.

THAT Baptism hath a power, is clear, in that it is so expressly said, *it doth save us*, 1 Pet. iii. 21: what kind of power, is equally clear from the way it is here expressed; not by a natural force of the element: though adapted and sacramentally used, it only can wash away the filth of the body; its physical efficacy or power reaches no further: but it is in the hand of the Spirit of God, as other sacraments are, and as the word itself is, to purify the conscience, and convey grace and salvation to the soul, by the reference it hath to, and union with, that which it represents. It saves *by the answer of a good conscience unto God*, and it affords that, *by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead*.

Thus, then, we have a true account of the power of this, and so, of other sacraments, and a discovery of the error of two extremes: 1. Of those who ascribe too much to them, as if they wrought by a natural inherent virtue, and carried grace in them inseparably: 2. Of those who ascribe too little to them, making them only signs and badges of our profession. Signs they are, but more than signs merely representing; they are means exhibiting, and seals confirming, grace to the faithful. But the working of faith, and the conveying of Christ into the soul to be received by faith, is not a thing put into them to do of themselves, but still in the Supreme Hand that appointed them: and He indeed both causes the souls of his own to receive these his seals with faith, and makes them effectual to confirm that faith which receives

them so. They are then, in a word, neither empty signs to them who believe, nor effectual causes of grace to them who believe not.

The mistake, on both sides, arises from the want of duly considering the relative nature of these seals, and that kind of union that is betwixt them and the grace they represent, which is real, though not natural or physical, as they speak; so that though they do not save all who partake of them, yet they do really and effectually save believers, (for whose salvation they are means,) as the other external ordinances of God do. Though they have not that power which is peculiar to the Author of them, yet a power they have, such as befits their nature, and by reason of which they are truly said to sanctify and justify, and so, to save, as the Apostle here avers of Baptism.

Now, that which is intended for our help, our carnal minds are ready to turn into an hinderance and disadvantage. The Lord representing invisible things to the eye, and confirming his promises even by visible seals, we are apt, from the grossness of our unspiritual hearts, instead of stepping up by that which is earthly, to the Divine spiritual things represented, to stay in the outward element, and go no further. Therefore, the Apostle, to lead us into the inside of this seal of Baptism, is very clear in designating the effect and fruit of it: *Not (says he) the putting away the filth of the flesh*, (and water, if you look no further, can do no more;) there is an invisible impurity upon our nature, chiefly on our invisible part, our soul: this washing means the taking away of that; and where it reaches its true effect, it doth so purify the conscience, and makes it good, truly so, in the sight of God, who is the judge of it.

Consider, 1. It is a pitiful thing to see the ignorance of the most, professing Christianity, and partaking of the outward seals of it, yet, not knowing what they mean; not apprehending the spiritual dignity and virtue of them. Blind in the *mysteries of the kingdom*, they are not so much as sensible of that blindness. And being ignorant of the nature of these holy things, they cannot have a due esteem of them, which arises out of the view of their inward worth and efficacy. A confused fancy they have of some good in them, and this rising to the other extreme,

to a superstitious confidence in the simple performance and participation of them, as if that carried some inseparable virtue with it, which none could miss of, who are sprinkled with the waters of Baptism, and share in the elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

And what is the utmost plea of the most for their title to heaven, but that in these relative and external things they are Christians; that they are baptised, hear the word, and are admitted to the Lord's table?—Not considering how many have gone through all these, who yet, daily are going on in the ways of death, never coming near Jesus Christ, *who is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life*, whom the word, and the seals of it, hold forth to believers. And they are washed in his blood, and quickened with his life, and made like him, and co-heirs of glory with him.

2. Even those who have some clearer notion of the nature and fruit of the seals of grace, yet are in a practical error, in that they look not with due diligence into themselves, inquiring after the efficiency of them in their hearts; do not study the life of Christ, to know more what it is, and then, to search into themselves for the truth and the growth of that life within them. Is it not an unbecoming thing, for a Christian (when he is about to appear before the Lord at his table, and so looks something more narrowly within) to find as little faith, as little divine affection, a heart as unmortified to the world, as cold towards Christ, as before his last address to the same table, after the intervening, possibly, of many months; in which time, had he been careful often to reflect inwards on his heart, and to look back upon that new sealing in his last participation, he might probably have been more conformable? And, truly, as there is much guiltiness cleaves to us in this, so, generally, much more in reference to this other sacrament that is here the Apostle's subject, *Baptism*, which being but once administered, and that in infancy, is very seldom and slightly considered by many, even real Christians. And so we are at a loss in that profit and comfort, that increase of both holiness and faith, which the frequent recollecting of it, after a spiritual manner, would no doubt advance us to. And not only do we neglect to put ourselves upon the thoughts of it in pri-

vate, but, in the frequent opportunities of such thoughts in public, we let it pass unregarded, are idle, inconsiderate, and so, truly guilty beholders. And the more frequently we have these opportunities, the less are we touched with them; they become common, and work not, and the slighting of them grows as common with us as the thing. Yea, when the engagement is more special and personal, when parents are to present their infants to this ordinance, (and then might, and certainly ought to have a more particular and fixed eye upon it, and themselves as being sealed with it, to ask within after the fruit and power of it, and to stir up themselves anew to the actings of faith, and to ambition after newness of life, and, with earnest prayer for their children, to be suitors for themselves, for further evidence of their interest in Christ;) yet possibly, many are not much engaged in these things even at such times, but are more busied to prepare their house for entertaining their friends, than to prepare their hearts for offering up their infant unto God to be sealed, and withal to make a new offer of their own hearts to him, to have renewed on them the inward seal of the covenant of grace, the outward seal whereof they did receive, as it is now to be conferred upon their infant.

Did we often look upon the face of our souls, the beholding of the many spots with which we have defiled them after our washing, might work us to shame and grief, and would drive us, by renewed application, to wash often in that blood which that water figures, which alone can fetch out the stain of sin; and then, it would put us upon renewed purposes of purity, to walk more carefully, to avoid the pollutions of the world we walk in, and to purge out the pollutions of the hearts that we carry about with us, which defile us more than all the world besides. It would work a holy disdain of sin, often to contemplate ourselves as washed in so precious a laver. Shall I, would the Christian say, considering that I am now cleansed in the precious blood of my Lord Jesus, run again into that puddle out of which he so graciously took me, and made me clean? Let the swine wallow in it; he hath made me of his sheepfold. He hath made me of that excellent order for which all are consecrated by that washing, who partake of it: *He hath*

washed us in his blood, and made us kings and priests unto God the Father. Am I of these, and shall I debase myself to the vile pleasures of sin? No, I will think myself too good to serve any sinful lusts: seeing that he hath looked on me, and taken me up, and washed and dignified me, and that I am wholly his, all my study and business shall be, to honor and magnify him.

LEIGHTON.

Baptism of itself Sanctifieth not.

ALTHOUGH Baptism be a sacrament to be received and honorably used of all men, yet it sanctifieth no man. And such as attribute the remission of sins unto the external sign, do offend. John (Matt. iii.) preached penitence in the desert, and remission of sin in Christ. Such as confessed their faults he marked and declared them to be of Christ's church. So that external baptism was but an inauguration or external consecration of those that first believed, and were cleansed of their sin, as he declareth himself in the same place: *I, saith he, baptise with water*; as though he said, 'My baptism maketh no man the better; inwardly, it changeth no man: but I call and preach to the outward ear; I exhort unto *repentance*. And such as say they do repent, and would change their old sinful life, *I wash with water*. He that inwardly cleanseth is *stronger than I*. His grace it is only that purifieth the soul. *I baptise unto repentance*; that is to say, into a new life.'

This new life cometh not until such time as Christ be known and received. Now to *put on Christ*, is to live a new life. Such, as be baptised, must remember that repentance and faith precede this external sign, and in Christ the purgation was inwardly obtained, before the external sign was given. So that there are two kinds of baptism, and both necessary. The one interior, which is the cleansing of the heart, the drawing of the Father, the operation of the Holy Ghost: and this baptism is in man, when he believeth and trusteth that Christ is the only actor of his salvation.

Thus be the infants examined concerning repentance and faith, before they be baptised with water; at the contemplation of the which faith God purgeth the soul. Then is the exterior sign and deed not to purge the heart, but to confirm, manifest,

and open unto the world, that this child is God's.

And likewise, baptism with the repetition of the words is a very sacrament and sign, that the baptised creature should die from sin all his life, as Paul writeth, Rom. vi. Likewise no man should condemn nor neglect this exterior sign, for the commandment's sake: though it have no power to purge from sin, yet it confirmeth the purgation of sin, and the act of itself pleaseth God, because the receivers thereof obey the will of his commandment.

Like as the king's majesty, that now is, immediately after the death of his father, was the true and legitimate king of England, right heir unto the crown, and received his coronation, not to make himself thereby king, but to manifest that the kingdom appertained unto him before. He took the crown to confirm his right and title. Had all England said nay, and by force, contrary unto God's laws and man's laws, with an exterior ceremony and pomp, crowned any other man, he should have been an adulterous and wrong king, with all his solemnities and coronation. Though this ceremony confirm and manifest a king in his kingdom, yet it maketh not a king, but the laws of God and of the land that give by succession the right of the kingdom to the old king's first heir male in England and other realms. And the babe in the cradle hath as good a right and claim, and is as true a king in his cradle uncrowned, as his father was, though he reigned a crowned king forty years. And this right of the babe should be defended and manifested, not only by the ceremony of coronation, but with all obedience and true subjection.

So it is in the church of Christ: man is made the brother of Christ, and heir of eternal life by God's only mercy received by faith, before he receive any ceremony to confirm and manifest openly his right and title. He saith, he believeth in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and believeth (he saith) the remission of sin; he doth not only deny the devil, the world, and sin, but saith he will forsake him for ever, and serve his Master, the Lord of virtue, King of heaven and earth. Thus assured of God, and cleansed from sin in Christ, he hath the livery of God given unto him, *baptism*, the which no Christian should neglect; and yet not

attribute his sanctification unto the external sign. As the king's majesty may not attribute his right unto the crown, but unto God and unto his father, who hath not only given him grace to be born into the world; but also to govern as a king in the world; whose right and title the crown confirmeth and sheweth the same unto all the world. Whereas this right by God and natural succession precedeth the coronation, the ceremony availeth nothing. A traitor may receive the crown, and yet be true king nothing the more. So an hypocrite and infidel may receive the external sign of baptism, and yet be no Christian man any the more, as Simon Magus and others.

Sacraments must be used holily, and yet not to have the office of Christ added unto them. Solely it is his office to sanctify and purge from sin. I take nothing from the sacraments, but honor them and extol them in all things, as they be worthy; howbeit, not too much. I call a sacrament, a ceremony instituted in the law of God to this end, that it should be a testimony of God's promise unto all such as believe; and a sign of God's good will and favor towards us. As Paul saith, that Abraham received a *testimony, by which God testified that he was received into grace*, Rom. iv. And as the promise of God, the remission of sin, is received by faith, so must these sacraments that be signs, tokens, and testimonies of the promise, be received in faith. Thus by Christ we are sanctified only; and, as Peter saith, *the chosen people, a princely priesthood, a holy people, and peculiar nation, to declare the power of Him that hath called us from the darkness of error and sin into his wonderful light*. These words declare the manner how we are sanctified, and what our office is after we are sanctified: to preach the power of Him that hath called us from the darkness of sin: as it is written, *This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise*, Isa. xliii.: and likewise in chap. lxvi. The Prophets and Apostles do use many times this word, *annunciare*, for *laudare*, and *gratias agere*. So doth Paul, *Mortem Domini annuntiabitis, donec veniat*;—ye shall shew the death of the Lord until he come, 1 Cor. xi.: i. e. ye shall celebrate the death of Christ with all praises and giving of thanks.

BP. HOOPER, (MARTYR.)

This outward sign doth neither give us the Spirit of God, neither yet grace, that is, the favor of God. For if through the washing in the water, the spirit of grace were given, then should it follow, that whosoever were baptised in water should receive this precious gift; but that is not so, wherefore I must needs conclude, that this outward sign, by any power or influence that it hath, bringeth not the Spirit or favor of God. That every man receiveth not this treasure in baptism, it is evident: for put the case, that a Jew or an infidel should say that he did believe, and believe not in deed, and upon his words were baptised in deed (for no man can judge what his heart is, but we must receive him unto baptism, if he confess our faith with his mouth, albeit, his heart be far from thence), this miscreant, now thus baptised, hath received this outward sign and sacrament, as well as the most faithful man believing. Howbeit, he neither receiveth the Spirit of God, neither yet any grace, but rather condemnation. Wherefore it is evident that the exterior sign giveth not this gift, which is also as certain in all other sacraments, yea, in the sacrament of the altar, which may be called a double sacrament. For it is not only a remembrance that the natural body of Christ was broken, and his blood shed for our redemption, as the Evangelists do testify, but also it is his spiritual body, which is the congregation of the faithful, as St. Paul testifieth, saying, *The bread which we break, is it not the partaking* (that is to say, we that are partakers) *of the body of Christ? For we* (saith he), *though we be many, yet are we one bread and one body*. But for all that,—the receiving of this sacrament giveth us not the Spirit of God, neither yet his favor: for the wicked receive it, as well as the good. Howbeit, that receiving is to their damnation. Wherefore it followeth, that the outward sign giveth no man any grace. Moreover, if the Spirit of God and his grace were bound unto the sacraments, then where the sacraments were ministered, there must the spirit of grace wait on; and where they were not ministered, should be neither spirit nor grace. But that is false, for Cornelius and all his household received the Holy Ghost, before they were baptised. In so much, that Peter said, *May any man forbid that these should be baptised with water, which have received the Holy Ghost,*

as well as we? And so he commanded them to be baptised, in the name of the Lord: here may we see, that as the Spirit of God lighteth where he will, neither is he bound to any thing. Yea, and this example doth well declare unto us, that the sacraments are given, to be an outward witness unto all the congregation of that grace, which is given before privately unto every man.

So, is baptism given before the congregation unto him, which before he receive it, hath either professed the religion of Christ, or else hath the word of promise, by the which promise he is known to be of the sensible congregation of Christ; and for this cause, when we baptise one, that is come unto the age of discretion, we ask of him, whether he believe: if he answer 'yea,' and desire baptism, then is he baptised, so that we require faith in him, before he be baptised (which is the gift of God, and cometh of grace), and so it is an outward sign of his invisible faith, which before was given him of God. If an infant be brought unto baptism, whom his friends offer up willingly, to sanctify and fulfil the commandment and ordinance of God, we inquire of his friends before the congregation, whether they will that their child be baptised: and when they have answered, yea, then receiveth he baptism. Here also went before the promise of God, that he of his grace reputeth our infants no less of the congregation, than the infants of the Hebrews, and through baptism doth the congregation receive him, which was first received through grace of the promise. Thus may we see, that baptism bringeth not grace, but doth testify unto the congregation, that he, which is baptised, had such grace given him before: so is baptism a sacrament, that is, the sign of an holy thing, even a token of the grace and free mercy, which was before given him; a visible example of invisible grace, which is done and given through the gentleness of God. . . . The children of Israel were a people, whom God had chosen from among all nations of the world, and gave them circumcision for a token and memorial of that election; which circumcision was a figure of our baptism: and they thought, that the Gentiles, which were not carnally circumcised, had been all condemned. But their opinion deceived them; for there were also of the Gentiles, which, although they were not circumcised out-

wardly, were elect of God, and were spiritually circumcised, which only is the thing that God regardeth: as Paul testifieth, saying, *He is not a Jew, which is a Jew outward; neither is that circumcision any thing, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is hid within the circumcision of the heart.* (Which is the cutting-off of carnal desires, and is the true circumcision.) This circumcision was in price with God, with the which the Gentiles, as Job, were circumcised. And in like manner, may we say of our baptism, he is not a Christian man, which is washed with water, neither is that baptism which is outward in the flesh: but that is the very baptism, which God alloweth, to be baptised spiritually in the heart, that is, to subdue and weed out the branches of sin, that it reign not in your mortal bodies, and bring them into bondage under it: of the which our baptism is but a sign. And there are many, I doubt not, which are thus spiritually baptised, although their bodies touch no water, as there were Gentiles thus spiritually circumcised, and yet never cut of their foreskin.

JOHN FRITH, (MARTYR.)

Reasons for Infant Baptism.

THERE is one thing that, I think, ought not to be omitted here, seeing it is of very great moment to our consolation: namely, that baptism is, by the will of God, to be administered not only to adult believers, but also to their children. The grounds for this, and those beyond all exceptions, are to be met with in Scripture: so that there is no necessity, with the Papists, who shamefully prevaricate in a good cause, to have recourse in this matter to unwritten tradition.

We readily acknowledge, that there is no express and special command of God, or of Christ, concerning infant-baptism: yet there are general commands, from which this special command is deduced by evident consequence. For to begin with what is most general; God declared to Abraham, that it was his constant and unchangeable will, that the sign of the covenant should not be denied to those in covenant with him, when he said, *And my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant*, Gen. xvii. 13. By these words, he commands the sign of his covenant to be in the flesh of all the posterity of Abraham, with which he had entered

into a covenant of grace. From this general injunction, he infers, ver. 14. the necessity of circumcision, because he then gave it as a sign of the covenant. When therefore, upon the change of the economy, he substituted, in the place of circumcision, another sign of the covenant, in consequence of that general command, all those in covenant are bound to take upon them the new sign. Moreover, believers under the New Testament belong to the spiritual posterity of Abraham, and are, if we consider its substance, partakers of the same gracious covenant, Rom. iv. 16, 17. not adults only, but also their children, as we shall presently show. Whence it follows, that the sign of the covenant in their body, is not to be denied to the young children of believers, any more than to believers themselves.

There is another command of Christ, *Go ye therefore, and disciple all nations, baptising them, &c.* Matt. xxviii. 19. There Christ commands disciples to be gathered into his school, and sealed, as persons in covenant with him, with the seal of baptism. But it is evident, when parents become the disciples of Christ, their children are also accounted in the number of disciples. Just as among the Jews, together with the proselyte parents, their young children were initiated in the Jewish rites. It was not therefore necessary, that Christ should expressly mention the baptism of infants. For, as it was a received custom among the Jews, that, together with the parents, who gave up their names to the God of Israel, their young children should be baptised (as we have shown above), the Apostles being sent to baptise the nations, and accustomed to the rites of their own country, could not but think, that together with the parents, who made a profession of the faith of Christ, they ought to baptise their infants, unless Christ had repealed the received custom by a contrary command. Which as we no where read he did, we are absolutely to conclude, that what we have now explained was our Lord's intention.

Peter supplies us with another argument, *Be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, &c.* Acts ii. 38, 39. Where the Apostle argues thus: they to whom the promise of grace was

made, are to be baptised, we subsume; but the promise of grace was made not only to parents, but also to their children: it therefore follows, that not only parents, but also their children are to be baptised. Both propositions are the Apostle Peter's. Now the whole difficulty consists in this; who are we here to understand by the children, who partake of the promise of grace: whether adults only actually called, who are capable of making a profession of their faith; or also younger children and infants? The orthodox justly affirm the last: not only because mention simply is made of children, without distinction of age; but also because God expressly promised to Abraham to be the God of his seed, which he applies to an infant eight days old, Gen. xvii. 7, 12. We add, as that Christ permitted *little children* to come to him, laid his hands upon them, and declared that of such was the kingdom of Heaven, Matt. xvi. 13-15. But whom Matthew calls *παῖδες*, *little children*, Luke, xviii. 15. calls *βρέφη*, *infants*; which word, according to Eustathius, properly signifies *a new-born child at the breast*. Hence also Peter says, *ὡς ἀπριγέννητα βρέφη*, *as new-born babes*, 1 Pet. ii. 2. And here it appears we are, by all means, to keep to the propriety of the terms, both in the noun *βρέφος*, and the verb *προσφέρειν*; *προσφέρον δὲ αὐτῷ τὰ βρέφη*, *and they brought unto him also infants*: they appear to have been carried in arms. It is therefore evident, that to infants are also made the promises of grace and salvation.

Let the fourth argument stand thus: It is unjustifiable to exclude from baptism those who are made partakers of the Holy Spirit: for thus Peter, *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?* Acts x. 47. True indeed it is, that the Holy Spirit discovered himself in those of whom Peter there speaks, by some extraordinary gifts, which of themselves were not saving: yet the principal argument for the right to baptism cannot be drawn from hence. The Apostle therefore considers those extraordinary gifts as the effects of the sanctifying Spirit, bestowed on all the elect; and as special indications of the divine bounty towards them, whereby the truth of the Gospel was sealed in them, and the sincerity of their faith adorned: compare Gal. iii. 2. and

thence, as from the thing signified, he argues to the participation of the sign. We moreover subsume: even the children of believers have received the Holy Spirit; for otherwise they could neither be *holy*, which yet Paul declares them to be, 1 Cor. vii. 14. nor be *Christ's*, to whom none belongs, who has not his Spirit, Rom. viii. 9. nor see the kingdom of Heaven, to which none is admitted, but he who is born of water and of the Spirit, John iii. 5. Whence it follows, that water cannot be forbid, that infants should not be baptised.

Fifthly, They who belong to the church of God, have a right to baptism. The reason is, because baptism is the sign of association with, and seal of initiation into the church: *they were baptised; and the same day there were added* (namely, to the church,) *about three thousand souls*, Acts ii. 41. And then it is represented as the privilege of the whole church, that she is *cleansed by Christ with the washing of water by the word*, Eph. v. 26. But that infants belong to the church, appears from this, that when God commanded his church to be gathered together, he did not suffer *their little ones, and those that sucked the breasts, to be absent*, Deut. xxix. 10, 11. Joel ii. 16; and protests that *they were born unto him*, Ezek. xvi. 20.

Sixthly, We argue from this, that baptism has succeeded in the room of circumcision. The Apostle declares this, Col. ii. 11, 12. where he proves the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and especially of circumcision, with respect to believers of the New Testament, from this consideration, that the spiritual thing formerly signified and sealed by circumcision, is now signified and sealed by baptism; intimating, that what circumcision was to the Old Testament church, the same now is baptism to the New, and indeed in a far more eminent and perfect manner, because baptism is an introduction at once into the liberty and grace of the New Testament, whereas circumcision contained the profession of a bondage and yoke. But it is evident, that circumcision was administered to infants; it therefore follows, that we are to have the same sentiment concerning baptism. And indeed nothing can be advanced against the baptism of infants, which may not equally militate against their circumcision.

Here certainly appears the extraordinary

love of our God, in that as soon as we are born, and just as we come from our mother, he hath commanded us to be solemnly brought from her bosom, as it were into his own arms, that he should bestow upon us, in the very cradle, the tokens of our dignity and future kingdom; that he should put that song in our mouth, *thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast: I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly*, Psal. xxii. 9, 10. that, in a word, he should join us to himself in the most solemn covenant from our most tender years: the remembrance of which, as it is glorious and full of consolation to us, so in like manner it tends to promote Christian virtues, and the strictest holiness, through the whole course of our lives.

Nothing ought to be dearer to us than to keep sacred and inviolable that covenant of our youth, that first and most solemn engagement that was made to God in our name. Nor is it any objection, that we were first bound in that covenant without our knowledge. For, no adult person, when he is informed of the excellency of that holy sacrament, which was bestowed in infancy, can be offended, that, according to the will of God, he was devoted so early by his pious parents to the supreme Being; unless, at the same time, he is resolved to renounce entirely the name of a Christian, and all his hopes of eternal salvation.

It cannot also fail to be very delightful to godly parents, to present to God and his Christ, their dearest pledges just began to enjoy the light, and consecrated in the water of the mystical font, or, as Dionysius the Pseudareopagite elegantly expressed it, "in the divine symbols of a divine birth," and recommended to the grace of God by the prayer of the whole church. Let this be the first care of their piety. Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 40. *in sanctum baptismum*, speaks as follows: "Hast thou a child? give not time to vice to gain upon him: let him be sanctified from a child, and consecrated to the Spirit from his tender years." And certainly if no other benefit accrued from infant-baptism, every prudent person will own it to be very great, that it lays the most inviolable necessity on parents, carefully to train up their children, which they have so early devoted to God, in the mysteries of the Christian

religion, and the practice of true piety, both by instruction, admonition and good example. "They incur the guilt of an impious robber or thief," as Bucer has gravely observed, *de Regno Christi*, lib. ii. c. 9. "who are not at the greatest pains to bring up and form those they have consecrated by baptism to the Lord Christ, to the obedience of Christ. For by this neglect, as much as in them lies, they again rob God of the children they gave up to him, betray and enslave them to the devil."

WITSIUS.

Note here, that the fathers made a league with God, not only for themselves, but also for their posterity, as God again, for his part, promised them, that he would be the God, not only of them, but also of their seed and posterity; wherefore it was lawful for them to circumcise their children, being yet infants. And in like manner it is lawful for us to baptise our little ones being yet infants, for as much also as they are comprehended in the league. For they which have now the thing itself, there is nothing that can let, but that they may receive the sign. It is manifestly written in the twenty-ninth chapter of Deuteronomy, that the league was made not only with them which were present, but also with them which were absent and not yet born.

PETER MARTYR.

Concerning young children, because their faith is unknown to us, it is requisite that they be partakers of the fruits of the sacraments; and it is not very likely that they have faith, because they have not the use of understanding, except God do work in them extraordinarily, the which appeareth not to us. Nevertheless we cease not to communicate to them baptism. First, for as much as there is now the same cause in baptism which was some time in circumcision, which is called by St. Paul, *the seal of righteousness which is by faith*, Rom. iv. 11; and also by express commandment of God *the male children were marked the eighth day*, Gen. xvii. 12. Secondly; there is a special regard to be had to the infants of the faithful; for although they have not faith in effect, such as those have that be of age, yet so it is that they have the seed and the spring, in virtue of the promise, which was received and apprehended by the el-

ders. For God promiseth not us only to be our God, if we believe in him; but also that he will be the God of our offspring and seed, yea, unto a thousand degrees; that is, to the last end. Therefore said St. Paul, that the children of the faithful be *sanctified from their mother's womb*. By what right or title then do they refuse to give them the mark and ratification of that thing which they have and possess already?

And if they allege yet further, that although they come of faithful elders or parents, it followeth not that they be of the number of the elect, and by consequent, that they be sanctified, (for God hath not chosen all the children of Abraham and Isaac;) the answer is easy to be made, that it is true all those be not of the kingdom of God, which be born of faithful parents; but of good right we leave this secret to God for to judge, which only knoweth it: yet notwithstanding we presume justly to be the children of God, all those which be issued and descended from faithful parents according to the promise, for as much as it appeareth not to us the contrary. According to the same we baptise the young children of the faithful, as they have used and done from the Apostles' times in the church of God; and we doubt not but God, by this mark, (joined with the prayers of the church which is their assistant,) doth seal the adoption and election in those which he hath predestinated eternally, whether they die before they come to age of discretion, or whether they live to bring forth fruits of their faith in due time, and according to the means which God hath ordained.

BEZA.

The place alleged of the Anabaptists is in the Acts, where the Eunuch was not permitted to be baptised before confession made of his faith.

The answer is made thus: that that was done to the eunuch, must not be drawn to the infants of Christians, rashly to keep them from baptism, which only is to be observed in strangers to religion, and those that are of full age; for we affirm, that such as are strangers from the church of Christ (as sometimes were the Jews and Gentiles, and as are at this day the Jews and Turks, and other such like,) ought not to be baptised until they have made profession of their faith. But the reason of

infants born of Christians, is of a far other sort and use; for they are accounted among the children and household of the church, by reason of the law of covenant. They be holy, and Christ commandeth them to be brought unto him. It is manifest they please God, because their angels always see the face of the Father.

And although our capacity cannot conceive their state and condition, yet Christ testifieth they have faith; and that they have the Holy Ghost, the examples of John Baptist and others teach us.

GUALTER.*

Necessity of regarding the Spiritual Nature of the Ordinances of God.

WERE it possible to persuade you, I would recommend one thing to you: learn to look on the ordinances of God suitably to their nature, spiritually, and inquire after the spiritual effect and working of them upon your consciences. We would willingly have all religion reduced to externals; this is our natural choice; and we would pay all in this coin, as cheaper and easier by far, and would compound for the spiritual part, rather to add and give more external performance and ceremony. Hence, the natural complacency in Popery, which is all for this service of the flesh and body-services; and to those prescribed by God, will deal so liberally with Him in that kind, as to add more, and frame new devices and rites, what you will in this kind, sprinklings, and washings, and anointings, and incense. But whither tends all this? Is it not a gross mistaking of God, to think Him thus pleased? Or, is it not a direct affront, knowing that He is not pleased with these, but desires another thing, to thrust that upon Him which He cares not for, and refuse Him what He calls for?—that single, humble heart-worship and walking with Him, that purity of spirit and conscience which only He prizes; no outward service being acceptable, but for these, as they tend to this end and do attain it. Give me, saith He, nothing, if you give not this. Oh! saith the carnal mind, any thing but this thou shalt have; as many washings and offerings as thou wilt, *thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of*

oil; yea, rather than fail, let the fruit of my body go for the sin of my soul, Mic. vi. 6. Thus we: will the outward use of the word and sacraments do it? then, all shall be well. Baptised we are; and shall I hear much and communicate often, if I can reach it? Shall I be exact in point of family-worship? Shall I pray in secret? All this I do, or at least I now promise. Aye, but when all that is done, there is yet one thing may be wanting; and if it be so, all that amounts to nothing. Is thy conscience purified and made good by all these; or art thou seeking and aiming at this, by the use of all means? Then certainly thou shalt find life in them. But does thy heart still remain uncleansed from the old ways, not purified from the pollutions of the world? Do thy beloved sins still lodge with thee, and keep possession of thy heart? Then art thou still a stranger to Christ, and an enemy to God. The word and seals of life are dead to thee, and thou art still dead in the use of them all. Know you not, that many have made shipwreck upon the very rock of salvation? that many who were baptised as well as you, and as constant attendants on all the worship and ordinances of God as you, yet have remained without Christ, and died in their sins, and are now past recovery? Oh that you would be warned! There are still multitudes running headlong that same course, tending to destruction, through the midst of all the means of salvation; the saddest way of all to it, through word and sacraments, and all heavenly ordinances, to be walking hell-wards! Christians, and yet no Christians; baptised, and yet unbaptised! As the Prophet takes in the profane multitude of God's own people with the nations, *Egypt, and Judah, and Edom; all these nations are uncircumcised;* and the worst came last; *and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart,* Jer. ix. 26, thus, thus, the most of us are unbaptised in the heart. And as this is the way of personal destruction, so it is that, as the Prophet there declares, which brings upon the Church so many public judgments; and as the Apostle tells the Corinthians, that for the abuse of the Lord's table, *many were sick, and many slept,* 1 Cor. xi. 30. Certainly, our abuse of the holy things of God, and want of their proper spiritual fruits, are amongst the prime sins of this land, for

* For this, and the two preceding passages, see Marbeck's Common Places.

which so many slain have fallen in the fields by the sword, and in the streets by pestilence; and more are likely yet to fall, if we thus continue to provoke the Lord to his face. For it is the most avowed direct affront to profane his holy things; and this we do while we answer not their proper end, and are not inwardly sanctified by them. We have no other word, nor other sacraments, to recommend to you, than those which you have used so long to no purpose; only we would call you from the dead forms, to seek the living power of them, that you perish not.

You think the *renouncing of baptism* a horrible word, and that we would speak so only of witches; yet it is a common guiltiness that cleaves to all who renounce not the filthy lusts and the self-will of their own hearts. For baptism carries in

it a renouncing of these; and so the cleaving unto these is a renouncing of it. Oh! we all were sealed for God in baptism; but who lives as if it was so? How few have the impression of it on the conscience, and the expression of it in the walk and fruit of their life! We do not, as clean-washed persons, abhor and fly all pollutions, *all fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.*

We have been a long time hearers of the Gospel, whereof baptism is the seal, and most of us often at the Lord's table. What hath all this done upon us? Ask within: are your hearts changed? Is there a new creation there? Where is that spiritual-mindedness? Are your hearts dead to the world and sin, and alive to God, *your consciences purged from dead works?* LEIGHTON.

SECTION XI.—ON THE LORD'S SUPPER.

This Sacrament instituted by Christ.

You all do know that things are more esteemed sometimes for the dignity and authority of the person, sometimes for the wisdom of the person, sometimes for the power and magnificence of the person, and sometimes for the tender love and kindness of the person. If need were, I could by examples set forth every one of these; but I hope it is not necessary. Now then, how can the thing, which we be about to celebrate, but be esteemed of every one highly, in that the Author of it doth want no dignity, no authority, no wisdom, no power, no magnificence, no holiness, no tender love and kindness; but hath all dignity, authority, wisdom, power, magnificence, holiness, tender love, mercy, glory, and all that can be wished absolutely? He is God eternal, co-equal, and substantial with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost, the image of the substance of God, the wisdom of the Father, the *brightness of his glory*, by whom all things were made, are ruled, and governed. He is the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords. He is the Messiah of the world, our most dear and loving Brother, Saviour, Mediator, Advocate, Intercessor, Husband, Priest. So that the thing which cometh from him cannot but be esteemed, loved, and embraced, if dignity, authority,

wisdom, power, glory, goodness, and mercy like us; yea, if any thing that can be wished like us, then cannot this which our Lord did institute, but like us, and that so much the more, by how much it is one of the last things which he did institute and command. God open our eyes to see these things accordingly, so shall we come with more reverence to this table of the Lord! which thing he grant for his mercy's sake! Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD, (MARTYR.)

The Efficacy of the Lord's Supper.

THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper directs us to the cross of Jesus Christ. We are not made partakers of Jesus Christ, nor feed upon him worthily and profitably, but in as far as we believe that he was crucified for us, and that we can appropriate to ourselves the power of his death, under a lively sense of our misery. These words must be true, and cannot deceive us: *Take, eat and drink. This is my body, which is given for you. This is my blood, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins.* By bidding us to take, he assures us that he is ours; and by ordering us to eat and to drink, he gives us clearly to understand, that he is of the same substance with us.

The principal efficacy of the Lord's Supper consists in these words, *which is*

given for you; which is shed for you. For otherwise, we should not derive much benefit from the body and the blood of Jesus Christ being now administered unto us, if they had not once been offered for our redemption.

All men confess that Jesus Christ is the Bread of life, by which believers are nourished to everlasting salvation: but they differ in their attempts to explain it. For some will decide the matter in a few words, by saying, that to eat the flesh of Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, is nothing else than to believe in him. But it appears to me, that our blessed Saviour, in this ever-memorable discourse, in which he recommends to us the eating of his flesh, intended to teach us something far more sublime and exalted; namely, that we are quickened by the real participation of himself, which he signified by the terms, 'to eat and to drink;' lest any one should imagine, that it consisted in nothing but mere knowledge. For as our body is nourished, not by looking on the bread, but by eating it; so our soul must truly and inwardly partake of Jesus Christ, that by his virtue, it may grow up unto spiritual life. The Lord, by calling himself, *the Bread of Life*, intended not merely to teach us, that our salvation consists in the faith of his death and resurrection; but he would likewise by the true communion which we have with him, transfer his life into us, and become ours. Those therefore give me as little satisfaction, who indeed allow that we have some fellowship with Jesus Christ; but, when they show us wherein this fellowship consists, declare that it is in the participation of his Spirit only, without making any mention of his flesh and blood; as if these words of our Lord, *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you;* with many more relating to this subject, were spoken to no purpose.

But how can any man venture to explain by words so deep a mystery, which I freely acknowledge exceeds all the powers of my mind, even to conceive? This I must confess, lest any one should measure the sublimity of it by my poor expressions, which fall infinitely short of its grandeur. Whenever I am to speak on this subject, after I have attempted to say every thing in my power, I am well aware that I have

said far too little, considering the dignity of the subject. Nothing therefore remains, but to be enraptured with this mystery, which neither the mind is capable of conceiving, nor the tongue of expressing.

Jesus Christ has imparted to his flesh an enlivening virtue, that we, by partaking of it, might be nourished unto immortality. *I am*, said he, *the living Bread, which came down from heaven: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*, John vi. 51. By these words he declares, that he is *the Life*, not as the eternal Word only who came down from heaven; but also because by descending, he has communicated this virtue to the flesh he assumed, that the participation of life might come even unto us. His flesh is *meat indeed*, and his blood is *drink indeed*, John vi. 55. From this consideration the godly derive this great comfort, that we now obtain life, by his having assumed flesh of our flesh.

Now, who does not see, that the communion of the body and the blood of Jesus Christ is necessary to all those who aspire to a heavenly life? To this, the following passages in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians have a reference: *And gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body*, ch. i. 22, 23; *the whole body being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth*, ch. iv. 15, 16. All this, we understand, cannot be otherwise effected, unless He be wholly united with us, both in body and in spirit. But the Apostle has extolled this most intimate communion, by which we are united with the body of Christ, still much higher, when he says, *We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, ch. v. 30. Finally, in order to signify that it exceeds every possible expression, he concludes his discourse with the exclamation, *This is a great mystery!* vers. 32.

Jesus Christ testifies and seals to us in the Holy Communion this sacred participation of his body and of his blood, by which he diffuses his life into us in the same manner as if he penetrated our joints and marrow; and this, not by presenting us with an empty and vain sign, but by displaying the efficacy of his Spirit, to accomplish that which he has promised. Hence the Apostle says, that *the bread which we break, is the communion of the body of Christ; and the cup of blessing which we*

bless, is the communion of the blood of Christ, 1 Cor. x. 16. It ought not to be opposed to us, that this is a figurative way of speaking, by which the name of the thing signified is attributed to the sign. We should certainly believe, that, by taking the symbol of the body of Jesus Christ, we at the same time receive the body itself. I therefore declare, that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ is verily and indeed exhibited to us under the signs of bread and wine, and consequently, his body and his blood, in which he has fulfilled all righteousness, to procure us salvation.

I willingly receive all that can serve to express properly the true communion which Jesus Christ imparts unto us of his body and of his blood in the Holy Supper; to express it in such a manner, that we may acknowledge, that it is neither by imagination, nor in thought only, we receive it, but that we enjoy the substance itself. I here embrace the truth of God in which he bids me to take and eat his body, and to drink his blood, under the signs of bread and wine. I doubt not, that he indeed offers it, and that I receive it from his hand.

Such is the presence of the body of Jesus Christ, which the nature of the sacrament requires. We believe and confess, that it exerts such virtue and efficacy, as not merely to replenish our souls with a firm assurance of everlasting life, but to assure us also of the immortality of our body; because, even here, it is quickened by his immortal flesh, and participates, in some manner, of his immortality.

CALVIN.

Of all natural unions there is no one so intimate, universal, and indissoluble, as that of the human body with the food which nourishes it. This is a beautiful representation of that real union which takes place between Jesus Christ and us, in the blessed and holy communion. We are then enabled to say, *Thou art mine; thou art in me; thou art my salvation, my strength, and my life*. So intimate is this union, that it penetrates the very soul, making Christ and the Christian one. *I live: yet not I: but Christ liveth in me*.

This union is universal. The mind, the heart, and all the affections feel the efficacy of the life of Christ. He is our light, our food, our life, our support. This union is inseparable; the cruelty of tyrants, so

ingenious in inventing means of separating the soul from the body, would be foiled in attempting to separate the food from the body after it has been received, and converted into our nature. Much less is it able to separate Jesus from the believing soul, which has once really received him by grace and faith, and has been quickened by the bread of life.

Christ gives himself to us in the Holy Communion, not as common food, but as a sacred victim offered for us in sacrifice. Here we discover the reason why he mentions *his body broken, given, or delivered, for us*. And on this account we break the bread, 1 Cor. x. 16. that we may thus represent his death to ourselves, under the type of a sacrifice, in which the victim was broken and cut in pieces. For this end he further says, that *his blood is shed*, because the effusion of blood was an important part of the oblation. The law of Moses declares, that *it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul*, Lev. xvii. 11. and according to St. Paul, Heb. ix. 22. *without shedding of blood is no remission*. In this manner Jesus presents himself to us as a bleeding victim. O God! what a victim does his love offer up for our salvation! what infinitely precious blood flows for sinners! Without this oblation, vain were all the sacrifices of old. Without this precious blood, vain would be the blood of all beasts, nay the blood even of all men. Behold; here is the expiatory Victim, so often prefigured and promised, and so long expected. *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!* John i. 29. *The Lamb slain, Christ, the true Passover, sacrificed for us!* 1 Cor. v. 7. I behold this Paschal Lamb not merely destined for the altar, but actually sacrificed: the stroke of death hath assailed it; it hath fallen under the slaughtering knife; its blood hath stained the earth, and satisfied the demand of eternal justice.

The Sacrament is an admirable representation of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and of his having fully expiated sin, and obtained eternal redemption for us. But how is this obtained? We are enjoined to eat the flesh, and drink the blood, of this expiating Victim: but both these were prohibited by the law, as a proof and sign, that the expiation of sin was not yet made, that all the atoning sacrifices were imperfect, and that sinners

still remained defiled, alienated from God, and incapable of being admitted to his fellowship. It is certain, that the blood was reserved for the altar, to make atonement for the soul, and that it was not lawful for any one to taste it. It is also certain, that in the propitiatory sacrifices, the people were not permitted to eat of the offerings for sin, and that the priests only had this right and privilege. Again, the priest himself, who was privileged to eat of the sin-offering sacrificed for another person, had not liberty to do it, when the offering for sin was made for his own person, to atone for his own transgressions, nor when an offering was made for the whole congregation, because he was himself a part of it. All these things are proofs of the insufficiency of the sacrifices made of old, which were incapable of affording to the soul of the sinner true food, solid comfort, and real assurance of the expiation of sin, and his reconciliation with God. But things are now entirely changed. We all eat of our Sacrifice. What was prohibited formerly, is now enjoined. *Take, eat: this is my body, broken for you. Drink ye all of this cup: for it is my blood, the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins.*

Rejoice, O my soul! as often as thou approachest to this feast! Had not the sacrifice been previously made, thou wouldst not be admitted to this feast. Had not thy sin been completely expiated, thou couldst not partake of this mystic repast of the flesh of the propitiatory sacrifice! Take, and eat: and so thou shalt prove the virtue of this divine Sacrifice by the salvation and life which it brings with it. My Saviour, out of love, has prepared this meat and drink for me, of which I stood in need. He is himself the bread of life, the bread which came down from heaven; and he presents himself unto me under the symbols of bread and wine in the Holy Communion, in order to assure me, He will himself be my food unto eternal life.

SUPERVILLE.

Let us come to this ordinance with raised expectations. The same faith that enlargeth the desire, and draws out that to a holy vehemence, should also elevate the hope, and ripen that to a holy confidence. When we come thirsting to these waters, we need not fear that they will prove like

the brooks in summer, which disappoint the weary traveller; for *when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place*, Job vi. 15, &c. Such are all the broken cisterns of the creature; they perform not what they promise, or rather what we foolishly promise to ourselves from them. No, but these are inexhaustible *fountains of living water*, in which there is enough for all, though never so many; enough for each, though never so needy; enough for me, though most unworthy.

Come, my soul, what dost thou look for at the table of the Lord? The Maker of the feast is God himself, who doth nothing little, nothing mean, but *is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we are able to ask or think*. When he gives, he gives like himself, gives like a king, gives like a God, *all things richly to enjoy*, considering not what it becomes such ungrateful wretches as we are to receive, but what it becomes such a bountiful Benefactor as he is to give. A lively faith may expect that which is rich and great from Him that is possessor of heaven and earth, and all the wealth of both; and that which is kind and gracious from Him that is the *Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation*. A lively faith may expect all that is purchased by the blood of Christ from a God who is *righteous in all his ways*, and all that is promised in the new covenant from a God who *cannot lie*, nor deceive.

The provision in this feast is Christ himself, and all his benefits, all we need to save us from being miserable, and all we can desire to make us happy; and glorious things, no doubt, may be expected with him, *in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell*. Let our expectations be built upon a right foundation, not any merit of our own at God's mercy and Christ's mediation, and then build large, as large as the new covenant in its utmost extent; build high, as high as heaven in all its glory. Come, expecting to see that which is most illustrious, and to taste and receive that which is most precious; come, expecting that with which you will be abundantly satisfied.

Though what is prepared seems to a carnal eye poor and scanty, like the *five loaves set before five thousand men*, yet when Christ hath the *breaking of those loaves*, they shall *all eat and be filled*.

In this ordinance the oil is multiplied, the *oil of gladness*; it is multiplied in the pouring out, as the *widow's oil*, 2 Kings iv. 2, &c. Do as she did, therefore; bring *empty vessels*, bring not a few, they shall be filled; the expectations of faith shall all be answered; *the oil stays not* (as there, ver. 6,) while there is an empty vessel waiting to be filled; give faith and hope their full compass, and thou wilt find (as that widow did, ver. 7.) there is enough of this oil, this multiplied oil, this oil from *the good olive*, to pay thy debt, and enough beside for thee and thine to live upon. As we often wrong ourselves by expecting too much from the world, which is *vanity and vexation*, so we often wrong ourselves by expecting too little from God, whose mercy is upon us, according as we hope in him; and who in exerting his power, and conferring his gifts, still saith, *According to your faith be it unto you*. The king of Israel lost his advantage against the *Syrians* by *smiting thrice*, and then *staying*, when he *should have smitten five or six times*, 2 Kings xiii. 18, 19; and we do often in like manner prejudice ourselves, by the weakness of our faith; we receive little, because we expect little; and are like them among whom *Christ could not do many mighty works, because of their unbelief*, Mark vi. 5, 6.

MATT. HENRY.

The Necessity of coming to the Lord's Supper.

AFTER all this, it is advised by the guides of souls, wise men and pious, that all persons should communicate very often, even as often as they can without excuses or delays; every thing that puts us from so holy an employment, when we are moved to it, being either a sin, or an imperfection, an infirmity, or indevotion, and an inactiveness of spirit. All Christian people must come. They indeed that are in the state of sin must not come so, but yet they must come. First they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbors, must come; that is no excuse for their not coming, only they must not bring their enmity along with them, but leave it, and then come. They that have variety of secular employments, must come; only they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come, and converse

with God. If any man be well-grown in grace, he must needs come, because he is excellently disposed to so holy a feast: but he that is but in the infancy of piety, had need to come, that so he may grow in grace. The strong must come, lest they become weak; and the weak, that they may become strong. The sick must come to be cured, the healthful to be preserved. They that have leisure must come, because they have no excuse; they that have no leisure must come hither, that by so excellent religion they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still. They that have fears and great reverence to these mysteries, and think no preparation to be sufficient, must receive, that they may learn how to receive the more worthily: and they that have a less degree of reverence, must come often to have it heightened: that as those creatures that live amongst the snows of the mountains, turn white with their food and conversation with such perpetual whitenesses, so our souls may be transformed into the similitude and union with Christ by our perpetual feeding on him, and conversation, not only in his courts, but in his very heart, and most secret affections, and incomparable purities. BP. TAYLOR.

In what state of mind we should come to the Lord's Supper.

LET us come to this ordinance with earnest desires towards God, and communion with him. It is a feast, a spiritual feast, and we must come to it with an appetite, a spiritual appetite: for the full soul loathes even the honey-comb, and slights the offer of it; but to the hungry soul, that is sensible of its own needs, every bitter thing is sweet, even the bitterness of repentance when it is in order to peace and pardon. Our desires towards the world and the flesh must be checked and moderated, and kept under the government of religion and right reason; for we have been too long spending our money for that which is not bread, and which is at the best unsatisfying; but our desires towards Christ must be quickened and stirred up. *As the hart, the hunted hart, panteth after the refreshment of the water-brook, so earnestly must our souls pant for the living God*, Ps. xlii. 1, 2.

The invitation is given and the promise made to them only that *hunger and thirst*; they are called to *come to the waters*, Isa. lv. 1.; to *come and drink*, John vii. 37; and it is promised to them *that they shall be filled*, Matt. v. 6. It is very necessary, therefore, that we work upon our hearts the consideration of those things that are proper to kindle this holy fire, and to blow up its sparks into a flame. We are then best prepared to receive temporal mercies, when we are most indifferent to them, and content, if the will of God be so, to be without them. *Did I desire a son of my Lord?* saith the good Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 28. Here the danger is of being too earnest in our desires, as Rachael, *Give me children, or else I die*. But we are then best prepared to receive spiritual mercies, when we are most importunate for them: here the desires cannot be too vehement. In the former case, strong desires evidence the prevalency of sense, but in this they evidence the power of faith, both realising and valuing the blessings desired. The devout and pious soul *thirsts for God, for the living God, as a thirsty land*, Ps. cxliii. 6; lxiii. 1. *It longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord*, and for communion with God in them, Ps. lxxxiv. 2. *It breaks for the longing it hath unto God's judgments at all times*, Ps. cxix. 20. Can our souls witness to such desires as these? O that I might have a more intimate acquaintance with God, and Christ, and divine things! O that I might have the tokens of God's favor and fuller assurances of his distinguishing love in Jesus Christ! O that my covenant interest in him, and relation to him, might be cleared up to me, and that I might have more of the comfort of it! O that I might partake more of the divine grace, and, by its effectual working on my soul, might be made more conformable to the divine will and likeness, more holy, humble, spiritual, heavenly, and more meet for the inheritance! O that I might have the earnest of the Spirit in my heart sealing me to the day of redemption!

Thus the desire of our souls must be towards the Lord, and towards the remembrance of his name. In this imperfect state, where we are at home in the body, and absent from the Lord, our love to God acts more in holy desires than in holy delights. It is rather love in motion, like a

bird upon the wing, than love at rest, like a bird upon the nest, Ps. lxxxiv. 3. All those who have the Lord for their God, agree to desire nothing more than God, for they know they have enough in him; but yet they still desire more and more of God; for till they come to heaven, they will never have enough of him. Come then, my soul, why art thou so cold in thy desires towards those things which are designed for thy peculiar satisfaction, distinct from the body? Why so eager for the meat that perisheth, and so indifferent to that which endures to everlasting life? Hast thou no desire to that which is so necessary to thy support, and without which thou art undone? no desire to that which will contribute so much to thy comfort, and yield thee an inexpressible satisfaction? Provision is made in the Lord's supper, of bread to strengthen thee; will not the sense of thine own weakness and emptiness make thee hunger after that? Canst thou be indifferent to that which is the staff of thy life? Provision is made of pleasant food, fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees; art thou not desirous of dainties, such dainties? Was the tree of knowledge such a temptation, because it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, that our first parents would break through the hedge of a divine command, and venture all that was dear to them to come at it? And shall not the tree of life, which we are not only allowed, but commanded to eat of, and the fruit of which will nourish us to life eternal, shall not that appear more pleasant in our eyes, and more to be desired? God, even thine own God, who hath wherewithal to supply all thy needs, and hath promised to be to thee a God all-sufficient, a God that is enough, he hath said it, *open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, Ps. lxxxi. 10. Thou art not straitened in him, be not straitened in thine own desires. MATT. HENRY.

I go to the sacrament for mercy, and strength to keep mercy; to profess my faith in Christ, that I have pardon and peace with God, life and righteousness only by his death and merits; and to own my obligation to live unto him that died for me, in faith, love, and self-dedication. I go to the sacrament for Christ's love and likeness, for the benefit and for the munition of the cross; to have the load of sin

taken from my heart, and any other which Christ thinks fit, laid on my back.

Was pardon, salvation, and life, received in the sacrament? Did I bid an eternal farewell to sin; and have I the poison of it expelled by the virtue of Christ's body and blood?

I go to the sacrament to leave sin behind me, and receive Christ instead of it; and if I do the one, laying my sins on Christ, with a will to forsake them, I am sure of the other. Lord, grant me thy peace, and all that comes with it, love, patience, resignation, thankfulness, deliverance from the fear of death, and a hearty longing for eternity.

I go to the sacrament for the pardon of sin, for the kindling of love, for the turning of my heart, for the renewal of my will.

I do not go to the Lord's table to give, but to receive; not to tell Christ how good I am, but to think how good he is. I have a great many sins and wants to tell him of, more than would take up the whole day; and when I have told him all that I know of myself, it is not the half, but a very little of what he knows of me. I bring myself, that is, sin, to him, believing that he will be all to me, and do all for me that is in his heart; and I know it is a very compassionate one. I go as a sinner to the Saviour. To whom else should I go, with my blind eyes, foul leprosy, hard heart, and rebellious will? You tell me I must have I know not how many graces and qualifications to go to the sacrament with; but I cannot stay for them; my wants are urgent; I am a dying man. My Lord, with his known kindness, says, *Come; Do this; Remember me.* His invitation is qualification enough; and I long to feed on him, to thank God for him, to take him into my heart. I will go to behold him crucified, and his blood poured out for me, in spite of all my sins and fears; and, though all the saints on earth stood up with one mouth to forbid me, I go to put myself under Christ's wings, and fly to him for refuge from the monster sin, ready to devour me.

I go to the sacrament to know God and myself; to wonder at the reconciliation of strict punishment with free pardon; to see the greatness of my sin, and the greatness of my hope, in the greatness of the sacrifice therein represented; to sin no more, because I believe there is no con-

demnation for my sin; to be raised as high as heaven, and humbled in the dust; to be astonished at the mystery of Christ crucified, and to profess that I know less of God than ever.

Let me be daily thinking of the sacrament, daily in a state of preparation for it, daily living on it, resolving to secure my portion in the love therein exhibited, by receiving it in faith and humility, as love and undeserved mercy, making it my pattern, and dreading the sin which could be expiated with no less a sacrifice.

Do this in remembrance of me. Remember who I am, and what thou art; remember me as thy Saviour; remember me as thy Master; remember my love; remember thy obligations; remember me as hating thy sin; remember me as bearing thy sin; remember me, and fear not; remember me, and sin not; remember me, to live for me, by me, with me.

REV. T. ADAM.

On the fear of eating and drinking damnation in partaking of the Lord's Supper.

OTHERS may dread the possibility of eating and drinking damnation unto themselves, in partaking of the Lord's Supper. This fear has agitated many sincere minds. It has arisen from the language of the Apostle; *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. xi. 29. But it is evident that the Apostle did not here mean eternal damnation, since he immediately adds, *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, ver. 30. The temporal judgments of God then, as consequent upon a wilful abuse of the Lord's Supper, are clearly intended. Accordingly the word *damnation* here means, as it is given in the margin of our Bibles, judgment, which is indeed the Apostle's own explication, in verses 31, 32. *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world*; which undoubtedly means, that if we would examine ourselves we should not be punished. But when we are thus punished, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. The apprehension then of eating and drinking our own eternal damnation has no foundation whatever in this passage of

holy writ.* Every sin exposes to eternal death, and therefore this amongst the number; but *he that confesseth and forsaketh* this, supposing him indeed to have committed it, as well as any other transgression, shall most undoubtedly *find mercy*.

But still, the dread *of eating and drinking unworthily* may rest on the mind. If our fears on this head arise from an apprehension that we are not in a state deserving to partake of this holy sacrament, they spring entirely from an erroneous sentiment. No one in this view is worthy of receiving so great a blessing. But the expression of the Apostle refers to a suitable, fit, becoming state of mind in partaking of the Lord's Supper. This is evident from the interpretation which he himself gives: *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself, not discerning the Lord's body*; not perceiving by faith the body and blood of Christ, not distinguishing between the consecrated elements of his body and blood and ordinary food, and therefore not being in a state of mind suitable for the sacred service. Nor is this use of the word uncommon. A criminal who has forfeited his life to the laws of his country, is wholly unworthy of the kindness of a benevolent visitor; and yet if he listen to the admonitions of such an instructor with meekness and contrition, if he welcome the truth which is placed before him, and appear desirous to profit by it, he may properly be said to have received them worthily. Every notion of merit must be carefully excluded from our views of the Lord's Supper. *We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not for our own works and deservings*. Our worthiness for this holy communion is that meetness which consists in right ideas of the institution, humble renunciation of our own righteousness, earnest prayers for an interest in the atonement of Christ, and hearty desires to be devoted to his service. It is the fitness of a contrite sinner for receiving the memorials of the blessings of salvation.

REV. D. WILSON.

* A writer on this subject observes, 'It is very plain that the Corinthians were punished for their improper conduct in regard to the Lord's Supper. This the Apostle calls the fatherly correction of the Lord, to which he opposes the final condemnation of the world, from which Christians are exempted.' See 1 Cor. xi. 32.

Encouragement to the Timorous.

THINK not to say within yourselves, we are not clean, surely we are not clean, therefore we come not to the feast; if you are not, why are you not? Is there not a *fountain opened*? Have you not been many a time called to *wash you, and make you clean*? You are unready, and therefore you excuse yourselves from coming; but is not your unreadiness your sin? And will one sin justify you in another? Can a man's offence be his defence? You think you are not serious enough, nor devout enough, nor regular enough in your conversations to come to the sacrament: and perhaps you are not; but why are ye not? What hinders you? Is any more required to fit you for the sacrament than is necessary to fit you for heaven? And dare you live a day in that condition, in which, if you die, you will be rejected and excluded as unmeet for heaven? Be persuaded therefore to put on the *wedding garment*, and then come to the *wedding feast*. Instead of making your unreadiness an argument against coming to this ordinance, make the necessity of your coming to this ordinance, an argument against your unreadiness. Say not I am too light and airy, too much addicted to sport and pleasures, am linked too close in vain and carnal company, or plunged too deep in worldly care and business, and therefore I must be excused from attending this ordinance, for this is to make ill worse: but say rather, it is necessary I come to the Lord's Supper, and come in a right manner; my soul withers and languishes, dies and perishes if I do not, and therefore I must break off this vain and sensual course of life, which unfits me for, and indisposes me to that ordinance; therefore I must disentangle myself from that society, and disengage myself from that incumbrance, whatever it is, which cools pious affections, and quenches that coal. Shake off that, whatever it is, which comes between you and the comfort and benefit of this ordinance: dally no longer in a matter of such vast moment, but speedily come to that resolution, *Depart from me, ye evil doers*, and evil doings, *for I will keep the commandments of my God*, Ps. cxix. 115.

Let me address this exhortation to those whose desires are strong towards the Lord, and towards the remembrance of his

name in this ordinance; but they are timorous, and are kept from it by prevailing fears: this is the case of many who we hope *fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant*, but they *walk in darkness, and have no light*, Isa. i. 10, who follow Christ, but they follow him trembling. Ask them why they do not come to this sacrament, and they will tell you they dare not come, they are unworthy, they have no faith, no comfort in God, no hope in Heaven, and therefore if they should come, they should eat and drink judgment to themselves. They find not in themselves that fixedness of thought, that flame of pious and devout affections which they think should be, and because they cannot come as they should, they think it better to stay away. What is said for the conviction and terror of hypocrites and presumptuous sinners, notwithstanding our care to distinguish between the precious and the vile, they misapply to themselves, and so the heart of the righteous is made sad, which should not be made sad. We are commanded to *strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; to say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not*, Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. But wherewith shall we comfort such, whose souls many times refuse to be comforted? If we tell them of the infinite mercy and goodness of God, the merit and righteousness of Christ, the precious promises of the covenant, their jealous hearts reply, all this is nothing to them; the Lord they think has forsaken them, their God hath forgotten them, and *utterly separated them from his people; as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to those heavy hearts*, Prov. xxv. 20.

But, O ye of little faith, who thus doubt, would you not be made whole? Would not you be strengthened? Is it not a desirable thing to attain to such a peace and serenity of mind, as that you may come with a humble, holy boldness to this precious ordinance? . . .

It is certain we have reason to abase ourselves, for at the best we are unworthy to come. If we are *less than the least of God's mercies*, how much less are we than the greatest, than this, which includes all? We are unworthy of the *crumbs that fall from our Master's table*, much more unworthy of the *children's bread*, and the dainties that are upon the table. Being

invited, we may hope to be welcome; but what is there in us that we should be invited? . . .

Yet let us come to this ordinance with a gracious confidence, as children to a father, to a father's table, not with any confidence in ourselves, but in Christ only. That slavish fear which represents God as a hard master, rigorous in his demands, and extreme to mark what we do amiss, which straitens our spirits and subjects us to bondage and torment, must be put off and striven against, and we must *come boldly to the throne of grace*, to the table of grace, not as having any thing in ourselves to recommend us, but as having a *High-priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, Heb. iv. 15, 16. As a presumptuous rudeness is a provocation to the master of the feast, so a distrustful shyness is displeasing to him, which looks as if we questioned either the sincerity of the invitation, or the sufficiency of the provision.

This is the fault of many good Christians; they come to this sacrament rather like prisoners to the bar, than like friends and children to the table; they come trembling and astonished, and full of confusion. Their apprehensions of the grandeur of the ordinance, and the danger of coming unworthily, run into an extreme, and become a hindrance to the exercise of faith, hope and love: this extreme we should carefully watch against, because it tends so much to God's dishonor, our own prejudice, and the discouragement of others. Let us remember we have to do with One who is willing to make the best of sincere desires and serious endeavours, though in many things we be defective, and who deals with us in tender mercy, and not in strict justice; and who, though he be out of Christ *a consuming fire*, yet in Christ is a gracious Father: let us, therefore, *draw near with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith*, Heb. x. 22. It is related of Titus the emperor, that when a poor petitioner presented his address to him with a trembling hand, he was much displeased, and asked him, 'Dost thou present thy petition to thy prince as if thou wert giving meat to a lion?' Chide thyself for these amazing fears; *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?* If the Spirit undertake to work all

my works in me, as the Son hath undertaken to work all my works for me, both the one and the other shall be done effectually. *Therefore hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.* MATT. HENRY.

What is to be done in coming away from the Lord's Supper.

LET us inquire then, what is to be done at our coming away from the ordinance, for the preserving and improving of the impressions of it.

We should come from this ordinance admiring the condescensions of the divine grace to us. Great are the honors which have here been done us, and the favors which here we have been admitted to: the God that made us hath taken us into covenant and communion with himself: the King of kings hath entertained us at his table, and there we have been feasted with the dainties of heaven; abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house: exceeding great and precious promises have here been sealed to us, and earnest given us of the eternal inheritance: now, if we know ourselves, this cannot but be the matter of our wonder, our joyful, and yet awful wonder. . . .

We should also come from this ordinance lamenting our own manifold defects and infirmities in our attendance upon God in it. When we look back upon the solemnity, we find that as we cannot speak well enough of God and of his grace, so we cannot speak ill enough of ourselves and of the folly and treachery of our own hearts. Now, conscience, thou art charged in God's name to do thine office, and to accomplish a diligent search; review the workings of the soul in this ordinance distinctly and impartially. . . .

O what reason have I to be ashamed of myself, and blush to lift up my face before God, when I review the frame of my heart during my attendance on this ordinance! How short have I come of doing my duty according as the work of the day required! My thoughts should have been fixed, and the subjects presented to them to fix upon were curious enough to engage them, and copious enough to employ them, and yet they went with the fool's eyes into the ends of the earth, and wandered after a thousand impertinencies. A little thing served to give them a diversion from the contemplation of the great things set before me. My

affections should have been raised and elevated, but they were low and flat, and little moved; if sometimes they seemed to soar upwards, yet they soon sunk down again, and the things which remained were ready to die. My desires were cold and indifferent, my faith weak and inactive, nor were there any workings of soul in me proportionable to the weightiness of the transaction. Through my own dulness and deadness and inadvertency, I lost a deal of time out of a little, and slept much of that, which might have been done and got there, if I had been close and diligent.

This thought forbids us to entertain a good conceit of ourselves and our own performances, or to build any confidence upon our own merit. While we are conscious to ourselves of so much infirmity cleaving to our best services, we must acknowledge that boasting is for ever excluded; we have nothing to glory of before God, nor can we challenge a reward as of debt, but must ascribe all to free grace. What good there is in us, is all of God, and he must have the honor of it: but there is also much amiss, which is all of ourselves, and we must take the shame of it, lamenting those sad effects of the remainder of sin in us, which we feel to our loss when we draw nigh to God in holy ordinances.

This thought obligeth us likewise to rely on Christ alone for acceptance with God in all our religious duties: he is that great and gracious High-priest, *who bears the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow in their holy gifts, that notwithstanding that iniquity, when it is repented of, the gifts may be accepted before the Lord,* Exod. xxviii. 38. *Of his righteousness, therefore, we must make mention, even of his only, for the most spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only through him,* 1 Pet. ii. 5.

We should likewise come from this ordinance rejoicing in Jesus Christ, and in that great love wherewith he hath loved us. From this feast we should go to our tents, as the people went from Solomon's feast of dedication, *joyful and glad in heart, for all the goodness that the Lord hath done for David his servant, and for Israel his people,* 1 Kings viii. 66. They that *went forth weeping must come back rejoicing*, as they have cause, if they *bring their sheaves with them,* Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6.

Hath God here lifted up the light of his countenance upon us? That should *put gladness into our hearts*, Ps. iv. 6, 7. Have we here lifted up our souls to God, and joined ourselves to him in an everlasting covenant? We have reason with the baptised eunuch to *go on our way rejoicing*, Acts viii. 39; the *day of our espousals* should be the *day of the gladness of our hearts*, Cant. iii. 11. This cup of blessing was designed to be a cup of consolation, and its wine ordained to make glad man's heart, to make glad the heart of the new man: having therefore drunk of this cup, let our souls make their boast in the Lord, and sing in his ways, and call him their exceeding joy.

Let this holy joy give check to carnal mirth; for having seen so much reason to rejoice in Christ Jesus, we deceive ourselves if we rejoice in a thing of nought: we are not forbidden to rejoice, but our joy must be turned into the right channel,

and our mirth sanctified, which will suppress and silence that laughter that is mad. The frothiness of a vain mind must be cured by a religious cheerfulness, as well as by religious seriousness.

Let it give check also to the sorrow of the world, and that inordinate grief for outward crosses, which sinks the spirits, dries the bones, and worketh death. Why art thou cast down, and why disquieted for a light affliction, which is but for a moment, when even that is so far from doing thee any real prejudice, that it works for thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? Learn, my soul, to sit down upon the ruins of all thy creature-comforts, by a withered fig-tree, a fruitless vine, and a blasted crop, and even then to sing to the praise and glory of God, as the God of thy salvation. When thou art full, enjoy God in all; when thou art empty, enjoy all in God.

MATT. HENRY.

SECTION XII.—ON THE SABBATH.

The Fourth Commandment equally binding with the rest.

AND now we must go on to consider THE SOLEMNITIES WHICH ATTENDED THE PROMULGATION OF THE MORAL LAW, of which the Fourth Command is so distinguished a part. These differed from the majesty which accompanied the first institution of the day of rest in Eden. Then it was enregistered in the bold and legible characters of the six days' order of creation; whilst the written record was brief and general. Now it is surrounded, in common with the remaining elementary branches of duty, with those traits of visible glory, that awful *voice of words*, that detailed record, that reference to a preceding enactment, those reasons of universal application, which, after a lapse of two thousand five hundred years, were best adapted to explain its import, and insure human obedience in all future periods of time. The moral law stands singular and alone, amidst the revelations made to Moses. The other communications were by more ordinary and usual means; the Ten Commandments by the immediate voice of God. The other parts of the Jewish economy were conveyed by

calm impressions; this by *thunderings and lightnings*, and *attendant angels*, and the *trembling mount*, and the *darkness*, and all the *terrors* at which *Moses exceedingly feared and quaked*. Recall to mind the solemn scene, that you may imbibe the full dignity of all the precepts of the moral law, and of the sabbatical amongst the number. Hear; the *trump sounds*, and the *voice of words* is uttered. See; no one but the holy prophet may approach: *if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it is stoned, or thrust through with a dart*. Behold; two tables of stone are prepared by the Almighty himself. Upon these the finger of God inscribes *The Ten Commandments*, and *ADDETH NO MORE*. The tables are broken by Moses, as he descends from the mount—and, lo, the law is re-written on second tables with the same hand; and is finally deposited, not with the rest of the Mosaic statutes, but separate and alone, within the ark of the covenant. Can any circumstances impress us with a more awful sense of the singular importance of every precept? Can any thing more distinguish and elevate the moral and perpetual, above the temporary and ceremonial law—and separate and single out the decalogue in

point of dignity and prominence from all other enactments? The whole Bible contains nothing so peculiar and majestic as this introduction to this new dispensation. Where is the man that will venture to lessen the number of the commandments? Where is the man that from ten will presume to reduce them to nine? Where is the Protestant that will expunge, with the Church of Rome, the command which happens most to militate against his corrupt practices? * Where is the man that will obliterate that precept especially, which so immediately respects the honor of God and the glory offered to his name, which, standing in the very heart of the code, binds its injunctions together, and gives strength and consistence to the whole?

I conceive it is impossible for simple-minded Christians to consider these things, and not to see at once the marked distinction between the shadow and types of a particular dispensation, and the eternal rules of right and wrong. Their prayer, I am persuaded, will continue to be, as to each particular commandment, and as to the fourth no less than the others, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law;' and as to the entire series, without exception or difference, 'Lord, write all these thy laws on our hearts, we beseech thee.' . . .

Again, THE DISTINGUISHING PROMISE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT HAS FOR ITS OBJECT TO RENDER THE DUTIES OF THE SABBATH MORE DELIGHTFUL, AND THUS INCREASES TENFOLD THEIR OBLIGATION.

For what is the distinguishing promise of the New Testament? What is the characteristic of the Gospel? Is it not the larger grace of the Holy Spirit? Is it not that it is *the ministration of the Spirit*? And what is the most important office of the Divine Spirit? Is it not to write this very law, these very Ten Commandments and none other, this very decalogue which was effaced from the heart of man by the fall, and which was republished with so much solemnity on Mount Sinai, and written on tables of stone with the finger of God, and deposited in the ark—is it not TO WRITE THIS LAW UPON THE HEART OF MAN? And would our Lord have promised the Holy Spirit for this pur-

pose, if he had himself relaxed any part of this law? And does not this promised aid increase the obligations of this law upon man, and exhibit its importance with a tenfold force?

Read the Apostle's comment in the 8th chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he describes the new covenant, and contrasts it with the old; *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt: because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws (the very decalogue of which we speak) into their mind, and write them in their hearts,* Heb. viii. 8—10.

And accordingly, is not the first commandment, to worship one God, thus written upon the heart? Is not the second, to *worship him not with graven images*? Is not the third, *not to take his awful name in vain*? And so of all the others. And is the fourth then omitted? Is there a gap, a failure in the divine code? Was the fourth precept inserted in the decalogue by a mistake? Are there ten commandments in the law, and only nine written on the heart? Is the institution of the Sabbath engraven and exhibited in the very order of the first creation, and not engraven in the order of the new creation? Is the soul of man formed to this heavenly temper in all other respects, and has he no taste for devoting the seventh portion of his time for the immediate service of his God? No, my brethren, we have no abrogation of the immutable law of God under the New Testament. On the contrary, the office of the Holy Spirit is to infix it deeply in all its parts on the inmost soul of man. This confirms and clenches all our preceding arguments; and especially that from the conduct and doctrine of our Lord, by whom the Spirit was sent for the comfort and guidance of the church.

The Apostle yet more distinctly teaches us this, when he says, that the Christian is an epistle of Christ, and refers to the

* The Popish catechisms have frequently omitted the second commandment; the practice may now be discontinued perhaps.

* 'If any man be in Christ he is a new creature;' OR, NEW CREATION, 2 Cor. v. 17.

two tables of the law as transcribed on the human heart, and to the Holy Spirit as the Divine Author of the transcription. Mark, I entreat you, his language: *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God: not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart*, 2 Cor. iii. 3. Here then are the two tables of the law—the first and second—the one containing the precepts of the love of God; the other, those of the love of man. Here is a precise transfer of this law, a removal from mere tablets of stone, to the *fleshly tablets of the heart*. In this transfer, do any of the commandments fall away? In the Christian's heart, the two tablets are re-impressed, the two tablets as they came from the hand of God. And has the fourth commandment disappeared in the passage through which all the rest have found their way from the tablets of a literal inscription, to those of the Christian's heart? No, my brethren, if 'there were a window in the Christian's bosom, you would see the fourth commandment filling as large a space of that epistle which *is written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God*, as it does in the decalogue of Moses.* You will find the Christian saying, *I delight in this*, as well as every other part of *the law of God, after the inner man*, Rom. vii. 22; you will find him acknowledging with St. John, *His commandments are not grievous*, 1 John v. 3; you will find him saying with the Psalmist, *Therefore hold I straight all thy commandments, and all false ways I utterly abhor*, Ps. cxix. 128.

Now just in proportion as the Holy Spirit is the grand peculiarity of the Christian dispensation, is the obligation of all the commandments, and therefore of the fourth, increased. We stated in a former place, that the new motives which the advancing privileges and light of the church continually afforded, were so many additional claims of the day of rest upon man. But how much more are these claims strengthened by the aid now vouchsafed by the Holy Spirit—this aid being the distinguishing object of all his operations—producing a transfer of the law of the Sabbath from stony to fleshly tables; and thus ending in a far lighter burden as to

external service, and a far weightier obligation in respect of love and gratitude?

REV. D. WILSON.

The Sabbath not affected by the abrogation of the Mosaic Dispensation.

SUCH is the estimate which we are led to form of the essential moral character of the law of the Sabbath, from a review of every part of the Old Testament. More than three thousand six hundred years since the first Sabbath have now elapsed. The sacred institution stands on the margin of the New Testament dispensation. We naturally inquire, then, what we might expect to be its dignity, if we find nothing directly to the contrary, in the kingdom of Messiah? It derived not its authority from the Levitical law; it could lose, therefore, none of its sanctity by the abrogation of it. The same respect would be due to it as before that intervening dispensation. Whatever the Sabbath was when it entered the Mosaic ritual, that would it be when it came from it. The cessation of the ceremonial law would no more release the worshipper of God from the observation of a weekly rest, than it would cancel the injunction of filial piety, or the prohibition of theft, murder, adultery, false witness, or concupiscence. The importance of all we have been considering is in this view very material. We have shown its divine institution in paradise, the traces of its observance during the patriarchal ages, its re-enactment in the wilderness before the Mosaic economy, at the miraculous fall of manna. We have also noticed its solemn incorporation in the Ten Commandments—the awful glories of that promulgation—its dignity above all the ceremonies of the Jewish religion—its essential and perpetual obligation as inculcated by the prophets, and destined to form a part of the Gospel age. It comes forth, therefore, from the hand of Moses with all its pristine authority, which it had, in fact, never lost as to any portion of the human race, except as the corruption of man had perverted or forgotten the original institution.

Nay, it enters the Gospel dispensation with more than its patriarchal majesty and obligation. It has been accumulating, not diminishing, its claims upon men, by all the testimonies to its essential importance which Moses and the Prophets gave. It has acquired new force, new evidence,

* Chalmers.

new illustration, by its position under an economy which, if it had been merely a ceremony, would have buried it amid a thousand surrounding rites.

The Gospel will, therefore, we may conclude, secure to the original institution of the Sabbath more ample scope, higher obligations, and a more elevated position of dignity and importance. The Gospel is the last and most perfect dispensation—the completion of all the preceding, the time of enlarged privilege, of superabundant grace! If, therefore, a weekly day of repose and religious worship was granted to the saints of the patriarchal dispensations—and if even under the law of bondage this blessing was continued to the Jew, much more will it be vouchsafed to the Christian,—much more will it accompany *the law of liberty*. We may be sure that the boon is not revoked; we may be sure that man is not doomed now to seven days' labor instead of six; we may be sure that his time for worshipping God is not abridged, nor the pledge of the covenant of grace lessened and restrained.

But this is not all. The Sabbath had been increasing in its moral influence upon man from the first institution. Every fresh motive to the love of God, every ray of glory from Mount Sinai, every prophecy of a future Saviour, had been augmenting proportionably his duty, by affording him more copious aids in fulfilling it. Christians, then, being favored with a clearer knowledge of the Divine will, having more motives to love and serve God, having a more abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit, than under any preceding period, we may be sure that their character will be superior, their delight in their worship of God more warm, their celebration of God's praises in creation and redemption proportionably more fervent. Yet, if a sabbatical institution is not binding upon Christians, we must reverse the supposition. We must forget the devotion of the patriarchs, the spiritual fervor of the psalmist, the zeal for the Sabbath which animated Nehemiah and Ezra, the delight in its duties foretold by Isaiah as marking the Gospel age; and the Christian must take his station below the Jew in spirituality and love. But this can never be the case. We may conclude that if one day in seven was the measure under more

imperfect dispensations, a less term cannot suffice under the influence of so many motives and inducements to a higher degree of love in the worship of God.*

We shall want, therefore, no enactment, no express command in the New Testament. Things will go on as they did before the Mosaic economy, except as a richer effusion of grace will render the Sabbath a more delightful season of repose than in the preceding ages. The worship of the New Testament will be, we may conclude, a restoration of the patriarchal in its primitive simplicity and purity, dropping the incumbrances imposed during the time of the law, and acquiring all the new influence and obligations which the infinite benefits of the Gospel confer.

And thus, as the patriarchal sacrifices passed on into the passover and numerous offerings of the law during the term of that intervening dispensation, and then emerged in the simple evangelical supper of our Lord—as the patriarchal circumcision reserved its rites during the same economy, and then yielded to the sacrament of baptism—as the patriarchal institution of marriage, suspended on account of the hardness of the people's hearts during the Jewish age, was re-established and came to its full effect in the Christian law of marriage,—so the patriarchal day of rest, with its worship of God, its celebration of the wonders of creation, and its provision for the religious repose of man, after having been annexed for a period to the national covenant of the Jews, was restored to its first design in the Christian Sabbath.

A re-enactment in the New Testament would be a denial, by implication, of its previous institution and authority. Nothing is re-enacted in the Gospel. The moral law, the essential duties of religion, the relations of man to his Maker and Benefactor, the necessity of a season for divine worship, the proportion of time destined for it from the creation, all the precepts of the decalogue—remain unchanged. They are not again formally promulgated. Creation and Mount Sinai suffice. They go on of course, and the Sabbath with them, if no express and formal abrogation of it be found in the Gospel.

REV. D. WILSON.

*The Change in the Day of the Sabbath,
and its continued obligation.*

IN the first ages of the world, the creation of the world was the benefaction by which God was principally known, and for which he was chiefly to be worshipped. The Jews, in their religious assemblies, had to commemorate other blessings—the political creation of their nation out of Abraham's family, and their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage. We Christians have to commemorate, beside the common benefit of the creation, the transcendent blessing of our redemption—our new creation to the hope of everlasting life, of which our Lord's resurrection to life on the first day of the week is a sure pledge and evidence. You see, therefore, that the Sabbath, in the progress of ages, hath acquired new ends, by new manifestations of the Divine mercy; and these new ends justify correspondent alterations of the original institution. It has been imagined that a change was made of the original day by Moses—that the Sabbath was transferred by him from the day on which it had been originally kept in the patriarchal ages, to that on which the Israelites left Egypt. The conjecture is not unnatural; but it is, in my judgment, a mere conjecture, of which the Sacred History affords neither proof nor confutation. This, however, is certain, that upon our Lord's resurrection, the Sabbath was transferred, in memory of that event, the great foundation of the Christian's hopes, from the last to the first day of the week. The alteration seems to have been made by the authority of the Apostles, and to have taken place on the very day on which our Lord arose; for on that day the Apostles were assembled, and on that day se'nnight we find them assembled again. The celebration of these two first Sundays was honored with our Lord's own presence. It was perhaps to set a mark of distinction upon this day in particular, that the intervening week passed off, as it should seem, without any repetition of his first visit to the eleven Apostles. From that time, the Sunday was the constant Sabbath of the primitive church. The Christian, therefore, who devoutly sanctifies one day in seven, although it be the first day of the week, not the last, as was originally ordained, may rest assured that he fully satisfies the spirit of the ordinance. Had

the propriety of the alteration been less apparent than it is from the reason of the thing, the authority of the Apostles to loose and bind was absolute.

I must remark, however, that their authority upon this point was exercised not purely in consideration of the expediency, but upon the higher consideration of the necessity of a change—a necessity arising, as I conceive, out of the original spirit of the institution. The original observation of a Sabbath on every seventh day was a public and distinguishing characteristic of the worship of the Creator, who finished his work in six days, and rested on the seventh. This was the public character by which the worship of the true God was distinguished, that his festival returned every seventh day; and, by the strict observance of this ordinance, the holy patriarchs, and the Jews their descendants, made as it were a public protestation once in every week against the errors of idolatry, which, instead of the true God, the Creator of the universe, paid its adoration either to the works of God, the sun and moon, and other celestial bodies, or to mere figments of the human imagination, misled by a diabolical illusion—to imaginary beings presiding over the natural elements, or the departed ghosts of deceased kings and heroes—and, in the last stage of the corruption, to inanimate images, by which the supposed influences of the celestial bodies and physical qualities of the elements were emblematically represented, and the likenesses of the deified kings supposed to be portrayed. To this protestation against heathenism, the propriety of which binds the worshippers of the true God in all ages to a weekly Sabbath, it is reasonable that Christians should add a similar protestation against Judaism. It was necessary that Christians should openly separate as it were from the communion of the Jews, who, after their perverse rejection of our Lord, ceased to be the true church of God: and the sanctification of the Saturday being the most visible and notorious character of the Jewish worship, it was necessary that the Christian Sabbath should be transferred to some other day of the week. A change of the day being for these reasons necessary, the choice of the Apostles was directed to the first day of the week, as that on which our Lord's resurrection finished and sealed the work of our redemption; so that, in the same

act by which we acknowledge the Creator, and protest against the claims of the Jews to be still the depositaries of the true religion, we might confess the Saviour whom the Jews crucified.

You have now seen that the Christian clearly stands obliged to the observance of a Sabbath,—that, in the observance of his Sabbath, he is held to the original institution of keeping every seventh day,—and that his proper Sabbath is the first day of the seven. By keeping a Sabbath, we acknowledge a God, and declare that we are not atheists; by keeping one day in seven, we protest against idolatry, and acknowledge *that* God who in the beginning made the heavens and the earth; and by keeping our Sabbath on the first of the week, we protest against Judaism, and acknowledge *that* God who, having made the world, sent his only-begotten Son to redeem mankind. The observation, therefore, of the Sunday in the Christian church, is a public weekly assertion of the two first articles in our Creed—the belief in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

I must not quit this part of my subject without briefly taking notice of a text in St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, which has been supposed to contradict the whole doctrine which I have asserted, and to prove that the observation of a Sabbath in the Christian church is no point of duty, but a matter of mere compliance with an ancient custom. In the second chapter of that epistle St. Paul, speaking of *the handwriting of ordinances which is blotted out, having been nailed to the Redeemer's cross*; adds, in the sixteenth verse, *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holiday, or of the new-moon, or of the Sabbath-days*. From this text, no less a man than the venerable Calvin drew the conclusion, in which he has been rashly followed by other considerable men, that the sanctification of the seventh day is no indispensable duty in the Christian church,—that it is one of those carnal ordinances of the Jewish religion which our Lord hath blotted out. The truth however is, that, in the apostolical age, the first day of the week, though it was observed with great reverence, was not called the Sabbath-day, but the Lord's day,—that the separation of the Christian church from the Jewish

communion might be marked by the name as well as by the day of their weekly festival; and the name of the Sabbath-days was appropriated to the Saturdays, and certain days in the Jewish church which were likewise called Sabbaths in the law, because they were observed with no less sanctity. The Sabbath-days, therefore, of which St. Paul in this passage speaks, were not the Sundays of the Christians, but the Saturdays and the other Sabbaths of the Jewish calendar. The Judaizing heretics, with whom St. Paul was all his life engaged, were strenuous advocates for the observation of these Jewish festivals in the Christian church; and his (St. Paul's) admonition to the Colossians is, that they should not be disturbed by the censures of those who reproached them for neglecting to observe these Jewish Sabbaths with Jewish ceremonies. It appears from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that the Sunday was observed in the church of Corinth with St. Paul's own approbation. It appears from the Apocalypse, that it was generally observed in the time when that book was written by St. John; and it is mentioned by the earliest apologists of the Christian faith, as a necessary branch of Christian worship. But the Sabbaths of the Jewish church are abolished; nor is the Christian, in the observation of his own Sabbath, to conduct himself by the childish rules of the old pharisaical superstition.

BP. HORSLEY.

The Universal obligation of the Sabbath.

To the general question, What regard is due to the institution of a Sabbath under the Christian dispensation? the answer is plainly this,—Neither more nor less than was due to it in the patriarchal ages, before the Mosaic covenant took place. It is a gross mistake to consider the Sabbath as a mere festival of the Jewish church, deriving its whole sanctity from the Levitical law. The contrary appears, as well from the evidence of the fact which sacred history affords, as from the reason of the thing which the same history declares. The religious observation of the seventh day hath a place in the decalogue among the very first duties of natural religion. The reason assigned for the injunction is general, and hath no relation or regard to the particular circumstances of the Israelites, or to the particular relation in

which they stood to God as his chosen people. The creation of the world was an event equally interesting to the whole human race; and the acknowledgment of God as our Creator is a duty, in all ages and in all countries, equally incumbent upon every individual of mankind. The terms in which the reason of the ordinance is assigned plainly describe it as an institution of an earlier age. "Therefore the Lord blessed the seventh, and *set it apart*." (That is the true import of the words 'hallowed it.') These words, you will observe, express a past time. It is not said, "Therefore the Lord *now* blesses the seventh day, and sets it apart;" but, "Therefore he *did* bless it, and set it apart in time past; and he now requires that you his chosen people should be observant of that ancient institution." And in farther confirmation of the fact, we find, by the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, that the Israelites were acquainted with the Sabbath, and had been accustomed to some observance of it before Moses received the tables of the law at Sinai. When the manna was first given for the nourishment of the army in the wilderness, the people were told, that on the sixth day they should collect the double of the daily portion. When the event was found to answer to the promise, Moses gave command, that the redundant portion should be prepared and laid by for the meal of the succeeding day; *For to-morrow*, said he, *is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: on that day ye shall not find it in the field; for the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days*. He mentions the Sabbath as a divine ordinance, with which he evidently supposes the people were well acquainted; for he alleges the well-known sanctity of that day to account for the extraordinary quantity of manna which was found upon the ground on the day preceding it. But the appointment of the Sabbath, to which his words allude, must have been earlier than the appointment of it in the law, of which no part was yet given: for this first gathering of the manna, which is recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, was in the second month of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt; and at Sinai, where the law was given, they arrived not till the third. Indeed, the antiquity of the Sabbath was a thing so well understood among the Jews themselves, that some of

their rabbins had the vanity to pretend that an exact adherence to the observation of this day, under the severities of the Egyptian servitude, was the merit by which their ancestors procured a miraculous deliverance. The deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage was surely an act of God's free mercy, in which their own merit had no share; nor is it likely that their Egyptian lords left them much at liberty to sanctify the Sabbath, if they were inclined to do it. The tradition, therefore, is vain and groundless: but it clearly speaks the opinion of those among whom it passed, of the antiquity of the institution in question; which appears, indeed, upon better evidence, to have been coeval with the world itself. In the book of Genesis, the mention of this institution closes the history of the creation.

An institution of this antiquity, and of this general importance, could derive no part of its sanctity from the authority of the Mosaic law; and the abrogation of that law no more releases the worshippers of God from a rational observation of a Sabbath, than it cancels the injunction of filial piety, or the prohibitions of theft and murder, adultery, calumny, and avarice. The worship of the Christian church is properly to be considered as a restoration of the patriarchal, in its primitive simplicity and purity;—and of the patriarchal worship, the Sabbath was the noblest and perhaps the simplest rite.

Dr. HORSLEY.

The Sabbath an indispensable Preparation for the Heavenly Blessedness.

BUT, lastly, we have pleaded for the Sabbath, because it is an indispensable preparation for THE HEAVENLY BLESSEDNESS. Its appeal to the human conscience terminates here. Heaven or hell is at stake. We all profess to look for a heavenly rest. There are few, perhaps none, who do not desire and expect to pass to a happy eternity when they die. Their ideas of its nature may be obscure, their preparations for it may be most defective. Still a vague hope of it, as opposed to eternal misery, and under the idea of a state of repose and felicity, occupies most minds. But let us consider the strict connexion which subsists between the employments and delights of the Sabbath upon earth, and those of that endless and

beatific Sabbath which *remains for the people of God* at last. Do we recollect the descriptions given in the Bible, of the company, the praises, the spiritual and unceasing employs of that exalted place? Is it a carnal repose which it offers? Is it bodily indulgence? Is it mere cessation from toil and sorrow? Is it not the eternal presence, the eternal enjoyment, the eternal praises of our God, and the Redeemer? Open the heavenly gates. You see the worshippers. You hear their hymns. What do they chant? The praises of *the Lamb that was slain; the love of him who died for them*; the majesty, and wisdom, and power, and glory, of their Father and Lord. And what is the temper of mind, what the habits, the notions of happiness, what the moral condition which can derive felicity from such an employ? It is an employ of continual holiness, ceaseless adoration, perpetual activity in the service of God. The loose ideas formed of heaven, as an exemption from suffering merely, as standing only in opposition to fatigue and weariness, as being contrasted with misery and condemnation—are most delusive. It is holiness—it is the love of God—it is the worship of the Lamb that was slain—it is the resting not day nor night in the praises of the Almighty—it is felicity derived from the completion of the divine faculties and habits acquired in this world.

Observe, then, the connexion of the Sabbath-duties here on earth, with these ultimate and consummated duties of the eternal Sabbath above. The employments of the day here are holiness, the adoration of God in Christ, the praises of creating, redeeming love. The Sabbath is the day of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit; that is, it is the very same in essence with the heavenly Sabbath; has the same objects, the same joys, the same praises, the same gratitude, the same sources of happiness.

He that would prepare for Heaven, must honor the Sabbath upon earth. He that would hope for the spiritual joys there, must acquire a taste and aptitude for them here.

All is connected in the divine plan. The Sabbath of the church militant is the pledge and foretaste of the Sabbath of the church triumphant. Were we in heaven without a new nature, a change of heart, a delight in the worship of God, an earnest longing after Christ, an acquiescence in holiness—

we should neither derive happiness from it, nor be capable of its employments. They who argue against our feeble, preparatory Sabbaths; they who object, cavil, contemn; they who prefer every other employment to the worship of God; they who complain of weariness and satiety in the services of Christ—have an evidence in their own breasts of their unfitness for a heavenly world—they are condemned out of their own mouths. The louder they exclaim against our Lord's day and its duties, the more decidedly do they exclude themselves from the Christian character and the Christian hope.

Let us, then, awake to the truth of the case. The day of Sabbath made and constituted for man, is essential to all his moral duties and hopes—it seals his evidence for a heavenly world—it prepares him for its joys and its employments—it forms its harbinger and foretaste.

The Sabbath will, therefore, never cease till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. As other figures and emblems terminated not till the substance of them came; so will not this grand type and foretaste of the ultimate repose of eternity, be determined, till earth gives place to heaven.

REV. D. WILSON.

As constituting a preparative for a still more perfect and permanent rest, the duties of this day assume a most useful and important character. The whole of a religious life is indeed a course of instruction for that exalted sphere, in which the Christian is one day to be placed. Days of devotion, and more especially the Sabbath, are the natural instruments for giving effect to this preparatory discipline. Whatever constitutes, in any degree, a duty on this day, is, though on a lower scale, the very act and exercise of angels, and the spirits of the blessed who dwell in the presence of God. When performed as such, it raises the soul from that dust to which it is accustomed to cleave; while the reflections which it indulges upon the labors, the cares, and the temptations of a finished week, suggest to it a pleasure, correspondent, though by faint and distant resemblance, to that which is felt by those disembodied spirits, who have entered into rest.

Meetness is deemed requisite in candidates for every state, either of service or enjoyment. To produce that meetness which Christ demands in those who aspire

to a place in his kingdom, previous habits of preparation are indispensably necessary. And what expedient can better answer so important a design, than the religious employment of such an interval of time as the periodical return of this sacred day affords? If social worship or solitary meditation have any efficacy, as means, in illuminating the mind, purifying the heart, and exalting the affections, they must possess this efficacy in a very high proportion at these solemn festivals, when their course is not embarrassed by intervening cares, nor their offices incumbered by worldly speculations. The mind is *then* most open to religious conviction, and the heart most accessible to devotional impressions, when the objects of daily engagement are fairly laid aside, and a veil is thrown over all the attractions and the follies of the world. How sweet is the Christian's intercourse, how profitable are his meditations, while prosecuting the various duties of this holy day! He finds throughout it, a nearer approach to God, and closer communion with the Father of his Spirit, than ordinary days and opportunities afford him. Standing, as he does, aloof from the snares and temptations by which he is most commonly beset, he feels his faith strengthened, his hopes encouraged, his joys increased, and all the graces of his character proportionably improved. The infirmities which had gained upon him in the current week, become sensibly reduced. The law of the spirit of life within him revives, and the law of sin proportionably declines. The errors which were corrupting his faith, are corrected; and the doubts which had begun to shake his confidence, are removed. New and brighter views of the love of God in Christ, and of his own peculiar interest in that regard, take possession of his soul: and the exercises which employ, and the pleasures which exhilarate him, fit him for returning to the affairs of the world; with less danger of being won over by its blandishments, or subdued by its terrors.

In such a view of the subject, the Sabbath must be considered as unquestionably intitled to no common veneration. While all days are in a manner sacred, as affording the means and bringing the obligation of religious duty, *this day* is commended to us by a variety of advantages, peculiarly connected with the purposes of its institution; and manifestly flowing from

the mercies of God to a fallen, an ignorant, and an indigent race. Designed as we are, in the covenant of his grace, for glory and happiness, elected to a kingdom of purity and joy, we find in the regular returns of a Sabbath, the means of quickening our languid affections in the pursuit of our high and glorious vocation; and of establishing, with more uniform and habitual attachment, our tastes and appetites for holy things. To such a day, the servants of God, necessarily immersed in cares and worldly perplexities, look forward with anxious desire, and devout impatience. Loving, as they do, the Tabernacles of the Lord of Hosts, and delighting in his word more than in their necessary food, their eyes long for the returning Sabbath, more than those that wait for the morning. Sickening at the sights and sounds of wickedness, they sigh for some temporary deliverance from the society, the jealousies, and the provocations of sinners; and eager to escape from what their hearts abhor, they anticipate that season of devout sequestration, in which, for a time at least, *the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.*

REV. JOHN OWEN.

The Sabbath was made for Man.

THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN; was originally granted him as a boon—was appointed for his necessary repose from worldly toil and care—was made, not for the Jew merely, but for man as man; for man as consisting of body and soul; as requiring rest and refreshment for the one, religious instruction for the other; as created for his Maker's glory, and destined for eternal happiness or misery.

What a noble declaration of the perpetual design and authority of the institution! Of all our Saviour's axioms, few are more clear, definite, important, universal. It takes for granted that there would be a Sabbath under his dispensation; and it defines its purposes, that it was made for the advantage and benefit of man—for his highest welfare both as to his body and soul.

Nor is the caution which our Lord adds less appropriate, considering the austerities which the Jewish masters had imposed; NOT MAN FOR THE SABBATH. Their error lay in overlooking the grand moral end of the institution. They taught that "man was

made for the Sabbath." Our Lord recalls the institution to its first and true design; he teaches that it was not a rite ending in itself, and to which all the moral purposes of it should yield; but that God would *have mercy and not sacrifice*, and that when the real spiritual and exalted interests of man, for which it was appointed, required a suspension of any of its outward observances, that suspension was lawful.

The axiom and caution explain all our Lord's conduct. The fundamental law of the Sabbath remains unchanged; as it began, so it will end only with the world itself. But the embarrassments and trammels of human fancy are dissolved, and its simplicity is restored. . . .

The Sabbath was made for man, to give him repose and religious peace, to give him time for the worship and adoration of God on earth; to be the solemn guarantee and type of his last rest; and to prepare and introduce him to the joy and ceaseless adorations of that glorious state. The Sabbath is man's privilege, interest, duty. The Sabbath is the glory of his religion, the highest exercise of his rational nature, the bond and link which connects him with all that is spiritual, all that is holy, all that is divine on earth; and which then transmits him to that exalted scene of eternal, and perfect, and uninterrupted spirituality, holiness, and blessedness in heaven, for which he was created.

REV. D. WILSON.

The Word and Ordinances are the general means whereby Christ conveys his quickening Power.

THE general means whereby God conveys his quickening power, are, his *word* and *ordinances*. This, like the pool of Siloam to the blind man, and like the waters of Bethesda to the lame, are the usual means of his healing power. These are the appointed and established means to which he has connected his promises; here, therefore, we may expect every blessing. It is the promise of his grace and presence in them, that renders them so important in the Christian practice, so useful in the Christian life, so delightful to the Christian's heart. When observed in faith; when through them we look to, and enjoy the power and influence of, the Lord; then, *Oh, how amiable are the tabernacles of the Lord!* His house is the

very *gate of heaven*; the believing mind longs to behold again and again that *glory of the Lord* which he has *seen in his sanctuary*, and to taste again those *waters of life* which have there refreshed his soul, in this *dry and barren land*. His word, indeed, connected with his promises and his ordinances, is the especial mean he uses for the regeneration and conversion of his people. The truth therein is brought into the mind, and strikes and affects it as the truth of God in all its glory and solemnity, its excellency and importance. Its views impress the heart; it is received, not with that general assent which leaves the greater part of professors uninfluenced by its declaration; but it is fixed upon the conscience, and received, not as the word of man, but as the word and power of God. Now the change is effected *from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God*. *The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and becomes a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. iv. 12. The words of Jesus become *spirit and life*, John vi. 63, because attended with his Spirit and life-giving power. The regenerating change in a sinner's heart is therefore generally attributed to this;—*being born again*, says the Apostle Peter, *not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 23; and the Apostle James,—*of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*, James i. 18. Oftentimes, when the immediate cause of this change is not perceived, it may be traced to some truth of the word of God lodged upon the mind by early education, general instruction, or Christian conversation, which the Spirit of God hath brought back to the recollection in its substance, if not in words; and impressed with an effectual influence on the heart. What, indeed, the Lord himself can do or effect without his word or ordinances, we know not, nor should we indulge ourselves in useless speculation on such a subject; it ought to be sufficient for us to know that these are his own established means of conveying his power and blessings; and that, though he can work without means himself, yet he obliges us to the observance of them. These considerations should make us exceedingly

thankful for the Gospel and Gospel ordinances, constantly attentive to reading his word, and waiting in his courts. *For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God . . . for how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?* Rom. x. 14. 17. Without the use of his means, we have no promise, and therefore can have no well-grounded expectation. In that believing use his promise insures his blessing. But then let it be remembered, whatever are the means employed, all the work itself is the work of the Spirit. Means can have no effect to change the heart: they are but a dead letter without him; it is his own power through them all that gives them their efficacy. REV. W. GOODE.

Benefits of the Ordinances of Social Worship.

BUT in this, as well as in every other duty performed to the Almighty, if the honor accrues to him, the benefit redounds in an equal proportion to those who perform it. The very homage that is paid in these acts of social adoration, is an instrument of generating, strengthening, and maturing the faith of the devout, beyond all the expedients of human contrivance. Man is, under all his forms, and through all his changes, the creature of habits. The Gospel, which renews him in the spirit of his mind, leaves him still subject to the infirmities of a corporeal nature. He needs the use, the repeated use, of services consecrated to religious purposes; and cannot renounce the means of grace, without endangering his hopes of glory. Of this need he is perpetually reminded, not only by a fear of danger, but by a sense of want; by strong desires after these sacred banquets; by *longings*, yea even *thirstings, for the courts of the Lord*; by appetites for spiritual nourishment, equally impatient of denial and restraint.

It is easy to imagine how cold and careless, how languid and lukewarm, that faith must become, which, relying for support upon its native strength, forsakes these *fountains of living waters*, whence so much fruitfulness and refreshment flow. Prophets and patriarchs visited them with gladness, and partook of them with gratitude and delight. They watered the

Church of Christ in the period of its greatest fertility, and made it fat and flourishing; and it is upon them that it must depend, under the Divine blessing, for those times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which may enable it to bring forth fruit in old age.

There is in these ordinances of social worship, a peculiar advantage to the rise, the progress, and the maturity of religion in the human breast. Not to mention how greatly the affections are drawn out and expanded by a union of spiritual natures in sublime and similar acts; not to dwell upon the opportunities which such occupation affords for exercising the noblest feelings of the heart, in holy love, and solemn sympathy, those exalted qualities of the Christian character; the services throughout are a school of instruction, and present the most edifying scenes for every stage and condition of faith. There are doubts, which the private Christian would tremble to divulge; and wants, which he would blush to own. There are terrors by which he is dismayed, and infirmities by which he is discouraged, that appear to belong exclusively to his own peculiar case; and fill him with apprehensions for his future and final salvation. In the various duties of social worship, this humble inquirer will find instruction and relief. By the word of God, as read and interpreted, his doubts are met and resolved, his wants anticipated and supplied; his alarms are shown to be needless and unfounded; his infirmities ordinary and natural: and he is dismissed with a conviction, that settles his faith, animates his hope, and reconciles him to the vicissitudes of his lot. He feels, that darkness and light, tears and comforts, are the alternate portion of the Christian below: he therefore girds up the loins of his mind; and in contemplation of the glorious recompense set before him, goes on his way rejoicing.

It is in assemblies thus constituted and conducted, that the members of Christ's mystical body are fitted for their respective offices; and that those who are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets are rendered lively stones in the spiritual building. Here food proportioned to the respective demands of the different worshippers is dispensed, by those whose office it is rightly to divide the word of life; milk for babes in know-

ledge and virtue, and meat for those more largely exercised in Christian experience. Here, rather than elsewhere, the weary and heavy-laden are comforted and refreshed; the hands that hang down are raised; the feeble knees are confirmed; the broken-hearted are bound up; deliverance is offered to the captives; and the acceptable year of the Lord is published to all. What sight can be more animating than the crowded courts of the living God? what sounds more elevating than the mingled prayers and praises of many worshippers? when the multitude address with one accord, their common Parent; when prayers and praises, audience and utterance alternately engage them; one heart and one soul appear to actuate and animate the whole assembly; fervor breathes in every accent; devotion sits on every eye; the kingdom of Heaven suffers a holy violence; and great grace descends upon them all.

REV. JOHN OWEN.

The Plea of being as religiously employed at Home, no justification for being absent from the House of God.

THE plea of being as religiously employed at home, however specious it may appear, is in fact no justification of systematical absence from the House of God. Sufficient, and more than sufficient time may be found in the course of the Sabbath, for solitary and private devotion, without trespassing upon the hours allotted to social worship; and it may well be doubted, the consideration of duty being put out of the question, whether any advantages derived from domestic meditation can counterbalance the loss of that sacred unction, which is often dispensed, and always promised to the assembled worshippers of the living God. To those who abstain from congregational worship on principles (if such they may be called) of profaneness, irreligion, or atheism; this treatise has little to offer. *Their* conduct is influenced by motives which are likely to be very slightly affected, by considerations either of moral duty or spiritual ad-

vantage. On them the language of threatening and of invitation is equally lost: their ears are alike insensible to the voice of the lawgiver, speak he ever so awfully; and to that of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Forgetful of God and abandoned to their lusts, they will not visit those assemblies in which they might hear their character delineated and their fate denounced. In a future assembly, which will *compel* their attendance, their eyes must behold Him whom their hearts refused to worship; and the distance they have kept from his sanctuaries on earth, will in righteous retribution be punished, by an edict of perpetual banishment from the felicity of his presence and the glory of his power.

A proportion of this guilt will also be contracted, by *infrequent attendance* upon social worship. A variety of circumstances may be imagined, under which a regular observance of public worship may be rendered utterly impracticable; nor would it be possible to delineate with exactness, the several cases of exception to the operation of this general rule. Men must be left to judge for themselves, of the weakness or strength, the falsehood or truth of those pretences, upon which they refuse obedience to the standing orders of a known and imperative law. To his own master each individual standeth or falleth. So much however it may be expedient to suggest, that the necessity should be very urgent, and the reason very manifest, which are pleaded to justify the intermission of religious duties in the House of God. Where the Almighty condescends to be present, a small difficulty should not obstruct the attendance of his creatures; where His visits are spontaneous and regular, ours should not be reluctant and intermitted. Is our attachment to His ordinances grown languid? are our desires after Him become faint? let us reflect upon the danger of treating them with indifference; and if we cannot be drawn to his house by a sense of his love, let us at least be driven to it by a dread of his displeasure.

REV. JOHN OWEN.

SECTION XIII.—ON JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ONLY.

Antiquity of this Doctrine.

THAT man is justified by faith without

the works of the law, was the uniform doctrine of our first Reformers. It is a far more ancient doctrine—it was the doctrine

of the whole college of Apostles: it is more ancient still, it was the doctrine of the prophets: it is older than the prophets - it was the religion of the patriarchs, and no one who has the least acquaintance with the writings of the first Reformers will impute to them more than to the patriarchs, the prophets, or apostles, the absurd opinion, that any man leading an impenitent wicked life will finally, upon the mere pretence of faith, (and faith connected with an impenitent life must always be a mere pretence) obtain admission into heaven.

BP. HORSLEY.

Justification Explained and Enforced.

AND, for a further declaration, to know how we obtain our justification, it is expedient to consider, first, how naughty and sinful we are all, that be of Adam's kindred: and contrariwise, what mercifulness is in God, which to all patient and penitent sinners pardoneth all their offences for Christ's sake. Of these two things no man is lightly ignorant, that ever hath heard of the fall of Adam, which was to the infection of all his posterity, and again, of the inexplicable mercy of our heavenly Father, which sent his only-begotten Son to suffer his most grievous passion for us, and shed his most precious blood, the price of our redemption. But it is greatly to be wished and desired, that, as all Christian men do know the same, so that every man might acknowledge and undoubtedly believe the same to be true, and verified even upon himself; so that both he may humble himself to God and acknowledge himself a miserable sinner, not worthy to be called his son; and yet sure, trust that to him, being repentant, God's mercy is ready to forgive. And he that seeth not these two things verified in himself, can take no manner of emolument and profit by acknowledging and believing the said things to be verified in others. But we cannot satisfy our minds, and settle our conscience, that these things be true, saving that we do evidently see that God's word so teacheth us.

The commandments of God lay our faults before our eyes, which putteth us in fear and dread, and maketh us see the wrath of God against our sins, as St. Paul saith, "*Per legem agnitio peccati.*" (*By the law is the knowledge of sin.*) Et, "*Lex operatur iram.*" (*The law worketh*

wrath), and maketh us sorry and repentant, that ever we should come into the displeasure of God, and the captivity of the devil. The gracious and benign promises of God by the mediation of Christ shew us, and that to our great relief and comfort, whensoever we be repentant and return fully to God in our hearts, that we have forgiveness of our sins, be reconciled to God, and be accepted, and reputed just and righteous in his sight, only by his grace and mercy, which he doth grant and give unto us for his dearly beloved Son's sake, Jesus Christ; who paid a sufficient ransom for our sins: whose blood doth wash away the same: whose bitter and grievous passion is the only pacifying oblation, that putteth away from us the wrath of God, his Father: whose sanctified body, offered on the cross, is the *only sacrifice of sweet and pleasant savour*, as St. Paul saith; that is to say, of such sweetness and pleasantness to the Father, that for the same he accepteth and reputeth, of like sweetness, all them that the same offering doth serve for.

These benefits of God, with innumerable others, whosoever expendeth and well pondereth in his heart, and thereby conceiveth a firm trust and feeling of God's mercy, whereof springeth in his heart a warm love and fervent heart of zeal towards God, it is not possible but that he shall fall to work, and be ready to the performance of all such works, as he knoweth to be acceptable unto God. And these works only, which follow our justification, do please God: for so much as they proceed from an heart endued with pure faith and love to God. But the works, which we do before our justification, be not allowed and accepted before God, although they appear never so good and glorious in the sight of man. For after our justification only, begin we to work as the law of God requireth. Then we shall do all good works willingly, although not so exactly as the law requireth, by means of the infirmity of the flesh: nevertheless, by the merit and benefit of Christ, we, being sorry that we cannot do all things more exquisitely and duly, all our works shall be accepted and taken of God, as most exquisite, pure, and perfect.

Now they, that think they may come to justification by performance of the law, by their own deeds and merits, or by any

other mean, than is above rehearsed, they go from Christ, they renounce his grace, "Evacuati estis a Christo (saith St. Paul, Gal. v.), quicunque in lege justificamini, a gratia excidistis." (*Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*) They be not partakers of the justice that he hath procured, or the merciful benefits that be given by him. For St. Paul saith, a general rule for all them that will seek such by-paths to obtain justification; those (saith he) which will not acknowledge the justness or righteousness which cometh by God, but go about to advance their own righteousness, shall never come to that righteousness which we have by God; which is the righteousness of Christ, by whom only all the saints in heaven, and all others that have been saved, have been reputed righteous, and justified. So that to Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer, of whose righteousness both their and our justification doth depend, is to be transcribed all the glory thereof. **ABP. CRANMER, (MARTYR.)**

Now then, when I have the grace to have in remembrance the circumcision of Christ, when I remember that Christ hath fulfilled the law for me, that he was circumcised, that he will stand between me and my damnation, when I look not upon my works, to be saved by them, but only by Christ; when I stick unto him, when I believe that my soul is washed and made clean through his blood, then I have all his goodness, for God hath given him unto me; and when I believe in him, I apply all his benefits unto me.

I pray God the Almighty to give every one of us such a heart that we may believe in him, for he is *the end of the law, the fulfilling of the same, to the salvation of all that believe on him.* What can be more comfortable? Therefore let us believe in him and be thankful. Now I must needs speak a word or two of good works, lest, peradventure, some of you be offended with me. I told you before wherein standeth our righteousness, namely, in this, that our unrighteousness is forgiven us; for we must needs confess, that the best works, that we do, have need of remission of sins, and so are not meritorious, for they be not perfect, as they ought to be; **AND THEREFORE WE LIVE OF BORROWING; WE HAVE NO PROPER RIGHTEOUSNESS**

OF OUR OWN; BUT WE BORROW, THAT IS TO SAY, WE TAKE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST, WHICH HE OFFERED FREELY TO AS MANY AS BELIEVE IN HIM. And this treasure of his righteousness is not wasted or spent; he hath enough for all the world, yea, if there were a thousand worlds. Therefore when we have been wicked, let us be sorry for our wickedness, and come to Christ, and call for forgiveness, and then take a good earnest purpose to leave sin.

There is a common saying amongst us here in England: 'Every thing is,' say they, 'as it is taken;' which, indeed, is not so; for every thing is as it is, howsoever it be taken, but in some manner of things it is true, as in this matter: we of ourselves are unjust, our works are imperfect, and so disagreeable unto God's laws; yet for Christ's sake we be taken for just, and our works are allowable before God; not that they be so indeed for themselves, but they be taken well for his sake. God hath a pleasure in our works, though they be not so perfectly done as they ought to be, yet they please him, and he delighteth in them and he will reward them in everlasting life. We have them not by our merits, but by Christ. And yet this sentence is true: *He will reward every one according to his deserving;* he will reward our good works in everlasting life, but not with everlasting life, for our works are not so much worth, nor ought not to be esteemed so as to get us heaven; for it is written, *The kingdom of heaven is the gift of God.* So likewise St. Paul saith, *Ye are saved freely without works,* Ephes. ii. 8. Therefore when ye ask, are ye saved? say yes. How? Marry, gratis, freely; and here is all our comfort to stay our consciences. You will say now, here is all faith, faith, but we hear nothing of good works; as some carnal people make such carnal reasons like themselves: but I tell you we are bound to walk in good works; for to that end we are come to Christ, to leave sin, to live uprightly, and so to be saved by him: but you must be sure to what end you must work, you must know how to esteem your good works. As if I fast and give alms, and think to be saved by it, I thrust Christ out of his seat; what am I the better when I do so? But I will tell you how ye shall do them. First, consider with yourselves how God hath delivered you out of the hands of the devil.

Now, to show yourselves thankful, and, in consideration that he commandeth you to do good works, ye must do them; and thereby we wrestle with sin. When the devil tempteth me, or in any wise moveth me to wickedness, then I must withstand and reprove it; and when he hath gotten at any time the victory, we must rise again, and be more wary afterward. And when thou feelest thyself feeble and weak, then call upon God, for he hath promised that he will help; there was never man yet, nor ever shall be, but he either hath, or shall find ease and comfort at God's hand, if he call upon him with a faithful heart. For, as St. Paul saith, *God is true, he will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength*, 1 Cor. x. If, therefore, we would once enter into a practice to overcome the devil, it were but an easy thing for us to do, if every one in his calling would direct his ways to Godward, and to do good works; as the parents in their calling to live quietly and godly together, and to bring up their youth in godliness; so likewise masters should show good examples, to keep their servants from idleness and wickedness. These are good works, when every one doth his calling, as God hath appointed him to do; but they must be done to the end to show ourselves thankful, and therefore they are called in Scripture *sacrifices of thanksgiving*; not to win heaven withal, for if we should do so, we should deny Christ our Saviour, despise and tread him under our feet. For to what purpose suffered he, when I shall by my good works merit heaven? as the Papists do, which deny him indeed, for they think to get heaven with their pilgrimages, and with running hither and thither. I PRAY YOU NOTE THIS, WE MUST FIRST BE MADE GOOD, BEFORE WE CAN DO GOOD. WE MUST FIRST BE MADE JUST, BEFORE OUR WORKS PLEASE GOD; FOR WHEN WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN CHRIST, AND ARE MADE GOOD BY HIM, THEN COMETH OUR DUTY, THAT IS, TO DO GOOD WORKS, TO MAKE A DECLARATION OF OUR THANKFULNESS.

BP. LATIMER, (MARTYR.)

Paul declareth, that for the death and merits of Christ we be saved, and not by our own virtues. So that faith doth not only show us Christ that died, and now sitteth at the right hand of God; but also applieth the merits of this death unto us,

ANTH.

and maketh Christ ours. Faith layeth nothing to gage unto the justice of God but the death of Christ, and thereupon claimeth mercy and God's promise, the remission of sin, and desireth God to justify and deliver the soul from the accusation of the law and right of the devil, which he is bound to do for his promise sake, Ezek. xxxiii. Matt. xvii. And although with this remission of sin he giveth likewise the Holy Ghost to work the will of God, to love both God and his neighbour, yet notwithstanding, the conscience, burdened and charged with sin, first seeketh remission thereof. For this thing the conscience laboureth and contendeth in all fears and terrors of sorrow and contrition. It disputeth not, what virtues it bringeth (wretched soul) to claim this promise of mercy; but, forsaking her own justice, offereth Christ, dead upon the cross, and sitting at God's right hand. It maketh nothing to be the cause, wherefore this mercy should be given, saving only the death of Christ, which is the only sufficient price and gage for sin.

And although it be necessary and requisite, that in the justification of a sinner contrition be present, and that necessarily charity and virtuous life must follow; yet doth the Scripture attribute the only remission of sin unto the mercy of God, which is given only for the merits of Christ, and received solely by faith. Paul doth not exclude those virtues to be present, but he excludeth the merits of those virtues, and deriveth the cause of our acceptance into the grace of God only for Christ.

And mark this manner of speech, *We are justified by faith*; that is, 'we are just through the confidence of mercy.' This word, *faith*, doth comprehend as well a persuasion and confidence, that the promise of God appertaineth unto us for Christ's sake, as the knowledge of God. For faith, though it desire the company of contrition and sorrow for sin, yet contendeth it not in judgment upon the merits of any works, but only for the merits of Christ's death. In case it did, it availeth nothing; for if a man desire to be delivered from the law, the law must be satisfied, which saith, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and all thy heart, and all thy strength*, Deut. vi. Now there is not, nor ever was, any man born of the stock of Adam in original sin, that

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feared God, as much as the law requireth, nor ever had such constant faith as is required, or such ardent love as it requireth: seeing those virtues that the law required be infirm and weak: for their merits we can obtain nothing of God. We must therefore only trust to the merits of Christ, which satisfied the extreme jot and uttermost point of the law for us. And this his justice and perfection he imputeth and communicateth to us by faith.

Such as say, that faith only justifieth not, because other virtues be present, they cannot tell what they say. Every man that will have his conscience appeased, must mark these two things: *How* remission of sin is obtained, and *wherefore* it is obtained. Faith is the mean *whereby* it is obtained, and the cause *wherefore* it is received, is the merits of Christ. Although faith be the means *whereby* it is received, yet hath neither faith, nor charity, nor contrition, nor the word of God, nor all those knit together, sufficient merits *wherefore* we should obtain this remission of sin. But the only cause *wherefore* sin is forgiven, is the death of Christ.

Now mark the words of Paul: *Freely, saith he, we are justified by his grace.* Let the man burst his heart with contrition, believe that God is good a thousand times, and burn in charity, yet shall not all these satisfy the law, nor deliver man from the ire of God, until such time as faith letteth fall all hope and confidence in the merits of such virtues as be in man, and say, Lord, behold thy unfruitful servant; only for the merits of Christ's blood give me remission of sins; for I know no man can be justified otherwise before thee, as David saith, *No man living shall be justified in thy sight*, Ps. cxliii. And again, *Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth no sin*, Ps. xxxii.

BP. HOOPER, (MARTYR).

Whosoever desireth to be assured that he is one of the elect pumber of God, let him not climb up to heaven to know, but let him descend into himself, and there search his faith in Christ the Son of God; which if he find in him not feigned, by the working of God's Holy Spirit accordingly, thereupon let him stay, and so wrap himself wholly, both body and soul, under God's general promise, and cumber his head with no further speculations, knowing this, *that whosoever believeth in him*

shall not perish, John iii; *shall not be confounded*, Rom. ix; *shall not see death*, John viii; *shall not enter into judgment*, John v; *shall have everlasting life*, John iii. vii; *shall be saved*, Matt. xxviii. Acts xvi; *shall have remission of all his sins*, Acts x; *shall be justified*, Rom. iii. Gal. ii; *shall have floods flowing out of him of water of life*, John vii; *shall never die*, John xi; *shall be raised in the last day*, John vi; *shall find rest to his soul, and shall be refreshed*, Matt. xi.

Now then forasmuch as we see faith to be the ground, whereupon dependeth the whole condition of our justifying, let us discuss in like manner what is this faith, whereof the Scripture so much speaketh, for the more plain understanding of the simple. For many kinds there be of faith, as a man may believe every thing that is true, yet not every truth doth save, neither doth the believing of every truth justify a man. He that believeth that God created all things of nought, believeth truly; he that believeth that God is a just God, that he is Omnipotent, that he is merciful, that he is true of promise, believeth well, and holdeth the truth; so he that believeth that God hath his election from the beginning, and that he also is one of the same elect and predestinate, hath a good belief, and thinketh well; but yet this belief alone, except it be seasoned with another thing, will not serve to salvation; as it availed not the Jews, which so thought of themselves, and yet think to this day, to be only God's elect people.

Only the faith which availeth to salvation is that whose object is the body and passion of Jesus Christ crucified; so that in the act of justifying, these two, faith and Christ, have a mutual relation, and must always concur together: faith as the action which apprehendeth, Christ as the object which is apprehended. For neither doth the passion of Christ save without faith; neither doth faith help, except it be in Christ; as we see the body of man sustained by bread and drink, not except the same be received, and conveyed into the stomach; and yet neither doth the receiving of every thing sustain man's body, except it be meat and drink, which have power to give nourishment. In like sort, it is with faith; for neither doth the believing of any thing save, but only faith in the blood of Christ; neither again doth the same blood of Christ profit us, except

by faith it be received. And as the sun, being the cause of all light, shineth not but to them only which have eyes to see, nor yet to them neither, unless they will open their eyes to receive the light; so the passion of Christ is the efficient cause of salvation, but faith is the condition whereby the said passion is to be effectual. And that is the cause why we say with the Scripture, that faith only justifieth us, not excluding thereby all other external causes that go before faith, as grace, mercy, election, vocation, the death of Christ, &c. all which be external causes, working our salvation through faith. But when we say, that faith only justifieth us, the meaning thereof is this; that of all internal actions, motions, or operations in man, given to him of God, there is none other that contenteth and pleaseth God, nor standeth before his judgment, or can help any thing to the justifying of man before him, but only this one action of faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. For although the action of praying, fasting, alms, patience, charity, repentance, the fear and love of God, be high gifts in man, and not of man, given of God to man; yet be none of all these actions in man imputed of God to salvation; but only this one action of faith in man, upon Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Not that the action itself of believing, as it is a quality in man, doth so deserve, but because it taketh that dignity of the object. For, as I said, the act of justifying faith, as it is an action in man, is not to be considered alone, but must ever go with his object, and taketh his virtue thereof. Like as the looking up of the old Israelites did not of itself procure any health unto them, but the promise made in the object, which was the brazen serpent, whereupon they looked, gave them health by their looking up; even so, after the like sort, are we saved by our faith and spiritual looking up to the body of Christ crucified, which faith to define is this:

To believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of the living God, sent into this world, by his death to satisfy for our sins, and so to receive the same.

JOHN BRADFORD, (MARTYR.)

We believe and confess, concerning justification, that as it cometh only from God's mercy through Christ, so it is perceived and had of none, who be of years

of discretion, otherwise than by faith only: which faith is not an opinion, but a certain persuasion wrought by the Holy Ghost in the mind and heart of man; wherethrough, as the mind is illuminated, so the heart is supplied to submit itself to the will of God unfeignedly; and so sheweth forth an *inherent* righteousness, which is to be discerned in the article of justification from the righteousness which God endueth us withal in justifying us; although inseparably they go together. And this we do, not for curiosity, or contention sake; but for conscience sake, that it might be quiet; which it can never be, if we confound, without distinction, forgiveness of sin and Christ's justice imputed to us, with regeneration and inherent righteousness. By this, we disallow the papistical doctrine of free-will, of works of supererogation, of merits, of the necessity of auricular confession, and satisfaction to God-ward.

R. FERRAR, late bishop of St. David's.

ROWLAND TAYLOR. JOHN PHILPOT.

JOHN BRADFORD. LAURENCE SAUNDERS.

J. HOOPER, late bishop of Worcester.

EDWARD CROME. JOHN ROGERS.

EDMUND LAWRENCE, and J. P.—J. M.

MILES COVERDALE, late bishop of Exeter.*

I, Martin Luther, an unworthy preacher of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus profess, and thus believe; that this article, THAT FAITH ALONE, WITHOUT WORKS, CAN JUSTIFY BEFORE GOD, shall never be overthrown, neither by the Emperor, nor by the Turk, nor by the Tartar, nor by the Persian, nor by the Pope, with all his cardinals, bishops, sacrificers, monks, nuns, kings, princes, powers of the world, nor yet by all the devils in hell. This article shall stand fast, whether they will or no. This is the true Gospel. Jesus Christ redeemed us from our sins, and he only. This most firm and certain truth is the voice of Scripture, though the world and all the devils rage and roar. If Christ alone take away our sins, we cannot do this with our works; and as it is impossible to embrace Christ but by faith, it is, therefore, equally impossible to apprehend him by works. If then faith alone must apprehend Christ, *before* works can follow, the conclusion is irrefragable; that faith alone apprehends

* This is part of a brief Confession of Faith subscribed by the above, dated 8th May, 1554.—See *Biographia Evangelica*, i. 350.

him, before and without the consideration of works: and this is our justification and deliverance from sin. Then, and not till then, good works follow faith, as its necessary and inseparable fruit. This is the doctrine I teach; and this the Holy Spirit and Church of the Faithful have delivered. In this will I abide. Amen. LUTHER.

Wherefore let those which give themselves to the study of the holy Scripture, learn out of this saying, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness*, to set forth truly and rightly this true Christian righteousness after this manner: that it is a faith and confidence in the Son of God, or rather a confidence of the heart in God through Jesus Christ: and let them add this clause as a difference; which faith and confidence is accounted righteousness for Christ's sake. For these two things (as I said before) work Christian righteousness: namely, faith in the heart, which is a gift of God, and assuredly believeth in Christ; and also that God accepteth this imperfect faith for perfect righteousness, for Christ's sake, in whom I have begun to believe. Because of this faith in Christ, God seeth not my doubting of his good-will towards me, my distrust, heaviness of spirit, and other sins which are yet in me. For as long as I live in the flesh, sin is truly in me. But because I am covered under the shadow of Christ's wings, as is the chicken under the wing of the hen, and dwell without all fear under that most ample and large heaven of the forgiveness of sins, which is spread over me, God covereth and pardoneth the remnant of sin in me: that is to say, because of that faith wherewith I began to lay hold upon Christ, he accepteth my imperfect righteousness even for perfect righteousness, and counteth my sin for no sin, which notwithstanding is sin indeed.

So we shroud ourselves under the covering of Christ's flesh, who is our *cloudy pillar for the day, and our pillar of fire for the night*, *Exod. xiii. 21*, lest God should see our sin. And although we see it, and for the same do feel the terrors of conscience, yet flying unto Christ our Mediator and Reconciler (through whom we are made perfect), we are sure and safe; for as all things are in him, so through him we have all things, who also doth supply whatsoever is wanting in us. When

we believe this, God winketh at the sins and remnants of sin yet sticking in our flesh, and so covereth them, as if they were no sin. Because, saith he, thou believest in my Son, although thou have many sins, yet notwithstanding they shall be forgiven thee, until thou be clean delivered from them by death.

Let Christians learn with all diligence to understand this article of Christian righteousness. And to this end let them read Paul, and read him again, both often and with great diligence, and let them compare the first with the last: yea, let them compare Paul wholly and fully with himself; then shall they find it to be true, that Christian righteousness consisteth in these two things; namely, in faith, which giveth glory unto God, and in God's imputation. For faith is weak (as I have said), and therefore God's imputation must needs be joined withal; that is to say, that God will not lay to our charge the remnant of sin; that he will not punish it, nor condemn us for it; but will cover it, and will freely forgive it, as though it were nothing at all; not for our sake, neither for our worthiness and works, but for Jesus Christ's sake in whom we believe.

Thus a Christian man is both righteous and a sinner, holy and profane; an enemy of God, and yet a child of God. These contraries no sophisters will admit, for they know not the true manner of justification. And this was the cause why they constrained men to work well so long, until they should feel in themselves no sin at all. Whereby they gave occasion to many (which, striving with all their endeavour to be perfectly righteous, could not attain thereunto) to become stark mad; yea, an infinite number also of those which were the authors of this devilish opinion, at the hour of death were driven unto desperation. Which thing had happened unto me also, if Christ had not mercifully looked upon me, and delivered me out of this error.

LUTHER.

I perceive what is your difficulty on the subject of faith. You are entangled in Augustine's notion, who goes the length of denying that our natural righteousness (*rationis justitiam*) is counted for righteousness before God—and so far thinks rightly; but then supposes that we are accounted righteous (or justified) on the ground of that fulfilling of the law, which

the Holy Spirit produces in us. You think therefore that we are justified by faith, because by faith we receive the Holy Spirit, that we may become righteous by fulfilling the law through his influence and operation. This notion makes our own obedience, purity, or perfection to be our justifying righteousness; and such renovation, it is confessed, must follow faith. But do you, my friend, turn off your eyes from this object, and from the law altogether, and fix them on the promise and on Christ; and perceive that we are accounted righteous, that is, are accepted of God, and have peace of conscience, for Christ's sake, and not for that of our renovation to holiness. For this latter is not adequate to that end. We are justified by faith alone, not because of that grace's being, as you write, the root of all virtues, but because it lays hold on Christ, for whose sake we are accepted, whatever be the amount of our renovation—which indeed must necessarily follow, but is not the thing that gives peace to the conscience. Love therefore (though it is *the fulfilling of the law*.) is not that which justifies, but faith only—not as constituting any perfection in us, but as apprehending (or embracing) the Saviour. We are righteous, (or justified) not because of our fulfilling of the law, or our love, or our renovation, (though these are the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us,) but for the sake of Christ—whom we apprehend by faith alone.

Augustine does not fully come up to the meaning of St. Paul, though he approaches nearer to it than the schoolmen; and I cite him, because of the general opinion entertained concerning him, though he does not sufficiently explain the righteousness of faith.—Believe me, the controversy concerning this subject is momentous and difficult. You will however rightly understand it, if you entirely turn away your eyes from the law, and from Augustine's notion of fulfilling the law, and fix your thoughts altogether on the free promise; considering that we are justified, or accepted and find peace, through the promise (alone) and for the sake of Christ.—This is the true doctrine, which sets forth the glory of Christ, and wonderfully relieves and cheers the conscience. I have endeavoured to explain it in the 'Apology,' or Defence of the Confession of Augsburg: but I could not there speak so freely, because of the cavils

of our adversaries, as I now speak to you; though in fact, I (in each case) say the same thing.—How would the conscience ever enjoy peace and assured hope, if it had to reflect thus: 'Then at length we may be accounted righteous, when our renovation is perfected.' What else is this, but to be justified according to the law, and not according to free promise? In that discussion (the Confession or the Apology) I said, that to attribute justification *to love* is to attribute it to our own work—understanding by that, a work wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. For faith justifies not as a work of the renewing of the Holy Ghost in us, but (simply) as embracing the Saviour; for whose sake, and not because of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us, we are accepted to the favor of God.
MELANCTHON.

Sin being taken away, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ: for David speaking of this righteousness, saith, *Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven*. No man is blessed, but in the righteousness of God: every man whose sin is taken away, is blessed. Therefore every man whose sin is covered, is made the righteousness of God in Christ. This righteousness doth make us to appear most holy, most pure, most unblameable before him.

This then is the sum of that which I say: Faith doth justify; justification washeth away sin; sin removed, we are clothed with the righteousness which is of God; the righteousness of God maketh us most holy. Every of these I have proved by the testimony of God's own mouth; therefore I conclude, that faith is that which maketh us most holy; in consideration whereof, it is called in this place, 'our most holy Faith.'

To make a wicked and a sinful man most holy through his believing, is more than to create a world of nothing. Our faith most holy! Surely, Solomon could not shew the queen of Sheba so much treasure in all his kingdom as is lapt up in these words. O that our hearts were stretched out like tents, and that the eyes of our understanding were as bright as the sun, that we might thoroughly know the riches of the glorious inheritance of the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards us, whom he accepteth for pure, and most holy, through our believing! O that the Spirit of the

Lord would give this doctrine entrance into the stony and brazen heart of the Jew, which followeth the law of righteousness, but cannot attain unto the righteousness of the law! Wherefore, saith the Apostle, they seek righteousness, and not by faith; wherefore they stumble at Christ, they are bruised, shivered to pieces, as a ship that hath run herself upon a rock. O that God would cast down the eyes of the proud, and humble the souls of the high-minded! that they might at the length abhor the garments of their own flesh, which cannot hide their nakedness; and put on the faith of Christ Jesus, as he did put it on, which hath said, *Doubtless I think all things but loss, for the excellent knowledge-sake of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have counted all things loss, and do judge them to be dung, that I might win Christ, and might be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law; but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith.* O that God would open the ark of mercy, wherein this doctrine lieth, and set it wide before the eyes of poor afflicted consciences, which fly up and down upon the water of their afflictions, and can see nothing but only the gulf and deluge of their sins, wherein there is no place for them to rest their feet. The God of pity and compassion give you all strength and courage, every day, and every hour, and every moment, to build and edify yourselves in this most pure and holy faith.

HOOKE.

St. Paul and St. James reconciled.

BUT they say we have more work on our hands, with James: who contradicts us in the plainest terms. For he teaches, that *Abraham was justified by works*, and that we all are *in like manner justified by works; not by faith only*. What then? Do they mean to drag forth Paul to fight the question out with James? If they hold James to be a minister of Christ, his meaning must so be taken, that it may not be at variance with Christ speaking by the mouth of Paul. The Spirit by the mouth of Paul affirms, that *Abraham obtained his justification by faith, not by works*. We in like manner hold, that all are *justified by faith, without the works of the law*. The same Spirit affirms by James, that both *Abraham's righteousness* and *ours* consists of *works, not of faith only*. That the Spirit does not contradict itself is

certain. What is the agreement then in the system of these men who oppose us? With them it is quite enough if they tear up the doctrine of justification by faith, which we maintain to have its hold by the deepest roots. To discover a ground for their own consciences to repose upon, is with them no great concern. Upon this principle, you may perceive them running down the doctrine of justification by faith, but in the mean time setting up no fixed point of righteousness, at which their consciences may have rest. Let them triumph then as highly as they please to triumph, while they have no better victory than this to shew, that they have abolished all dependance on which justification stands. And a miserable victory truly they will possess, when, the light of truth having been by them put out, God shall have permitted them to spread darkness all around them. On which side soever the truth of God shall stand, they will get no ground by their pursuit. I deny therefore that James's opinion, which they continually hold like Achilles's shield in our faces, stands them in any stead at all. To make this plain, it is proper, in the first place, to mark what are the Apostle's views; then to notice where it is they stumble. As there were, in those days, many who constitute a mischief perpetual in the church, who manifestly detected their want of faith, by disregarding the works of faithful men, and yet would not give over boasting of the false name of faith, the Apostle here eludes their foolish audacity. Therefore it is not his purpose to derogate in the least degree from the value of true faith, but to shew how widely from the purpose these triflers go, in arrogating so much to the unsubstantial name of faith, that being satisfied with it, they fearlessly abandon themselves to all dissoluteness of vice. This state of the argument being considered, it becomes easy to see where our adversaries stumble. For they snare themselves in a two-fold paralogism. One paralogism lies in the double use of *faith*, the other in that of the word *justify*. While the Apostle denominates as faith, an unsubstantial notion far from the nature of true faith, he does it in the way of concession, which derogates nothing from his cause. Of this he leaves no question from the beginning, as instanced in the following words: *What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man shall say he hath faith and have not works?* He does not say, if

a man *have* faith without works, but if he *boasts* it. He expresses the same sentiment still more plainly a little further, where he makes such faith, in the way of ridicule, of less value than the knowledge of the devils; and last of all, where he calls it dead. But from the definition that he lays down, you might abundantly collect his meaning. *You believe*, he says, *that there is one God*. In very truth, if no other article is contained within this faith, it is no wonder that it does not justify. Nor are we to think, that when that property is denied concerning it, any derogation is made from Christian faith, which is widely different in its nature. For in what other way does true faith justify, than while it joins us closely with Christ; so that being become one with him, we are sharers in the benefit of his righteousness? Hence it does not therefore justify us because it affords some notion of the attributes of God, but because it rests upon the assurance of his mercy.

But we have not yet hit the mark we aimed at, unless we clear away the other paralogism arising from James placing part of justification in works. If you would make James consistent with the other parts of Scripture and with himself, it is necessary to understand the word *justify* in another sense from that in which it is used by Paul. For we are said by Paul to be justified, when the memory of our unrighteousness being blotted out, we are reputed as righteous men. If James had had this sense in view, he would have distorted the parts of his argument, when he made his citation from Moses,—*Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness*. For thus he works it in: Abraham obtained righteousness by works, because he did not hesitate to offer up his son when God commanded him; and so the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, *that he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*. If it is an absurdity that the effect should come before its cause, either Moses falsely testifies in the place alluded to, that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness, or he did not obtain his righteousness from that obedience which he shewed in the offering up of Isaac. Abraham was justified by his faith, while Ishmael was not yet conceived, who was grown to man's estate before Isaac was born. How then shall we say that he acquired his justification, by an obedience which followed a long time after? Where-

fore either James falsely inverts the order of facts, which it is impious to suppose; or he did not mean so to say, that he was justified, as that he had deserved to be accounted just. What then? Without all doubt he speaks of the declaration of justification, not the imputation. As if he should say, 'Those who are justified by true faith prove their righteousness by obedience and good works, not by the bare imaginary name of faith.' In fine, he is not agitating the question by what means we are made righteous, but he demands a working righteousness from believing men. And just as Paul contends that we are made just without the help of works, he does not allow those persons to be accounted just, who are without good works. The consideration of this his object will set us free from every difficulty; for our adversaries are principally mistaken in this part, that they imagine James is laying down a definition of justification, while there is nothing else he is laboring to accomplish than to pull down the ill-grounded security of those who vainly spread the plea of faith as a cover to excuse their contempt of good works. So then let them torture James's words in whatever way they please, they will get out of them nothing further than the two following maxims: that the empty imitation of faith does not justify; and that the faithful man, not satisfied with such a show, declares his righteousness by his good works.

CALVIN.

Nature of Justifying Faith.

For that faith which bringeth forth, without repentance, either evil works, or no good works, is not a right, pure, and lively faith; but a dead, devilish, counterfeit, and feigned faith; as St. Paul and St. James call it. For even the devils know and believe that Christ was born of a virgin; that he fasted forty days and forty nights without meat and drink; that he wrought all kinds of miracles, declaring himself very God: they believe also, that Christ for our sakes suffered a most painful death, to redeem us from everlasting death; and that he rose again from death the third day: they believe that he ascended into heaven; and that he sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and at the last end of this world shall come again, and judge both the quick and the dead. These articles of our faith the devils believe: and so they believe all

things that be written in the New and Old Testament to be true : and yet for all this faith they be but devils ; remaining still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith.

For the right and true Christian faith is, not only to believe that Holy Scripture, and all the aforesaid articles of our faith, are true ; but also to have a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises, to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ : whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments. And this true Christian faith neither any devil hath ; nor yet any man, which in the outward profession of his mouth, and in his outward receiving of the sacraments, in coming to the church, and in all other outward appearances seemeth to be a Christian man, and yet in his living and deeds sheweth the contrary.

For how can a man have this true faith, this sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins be forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God, and to be partaker of the kingdom of heaven by Christ ; when he liveth ungodlily, and denieth Christ in his deeds ? Surely no such ungodly man can have this faith and trust in God. For as they know Christ to be the only Saviour of the world ; so they know also that wicked men shall not enjoy the kingdom of God. They know that God hateth unrighteousness : that he will destroy all those that speak untruly, Ps. v. 6 : that those which have done good works, which cannot be done without a lively faith in Christ, shall come forth into the resurrection of life : and those that have done evil shall come unto the resurrection of judgment. Very well they know also, that to them that be contentious, and to them that will not be obedient unto the truth, but will obey unrighteousness, shall come indignation, wrath, and affliction, &c.

Therefore to conclude : Considering the infinite benefits of God, shewed and given unto us mercifully without our deserts ;—who hath not only created us of nothing, and from a piece of vile clay, of his infinite goodness hath exalted us, as touching our soul, unto his own similitude and likeness ; but also, whereas we were condemned to hell, and death everlasting, hath given his own natural Son, being God eternal, immortal, and equal unto himself in power and glory, to be incarnated ; and to take our mortal nature upon him, with the infir-

mities of the same ; and in the same nature to suffer most shameful and painful death for our offences, to the intent to justify us, and to restore us to life everlasting ; so making us also his dear children, brethren unto his only Son our Saviour Christ, and inheritors for ever with him of his eternal kingdom of heaven :—These great and merciful benefits of God, if they be well considered, do neither minister unto us occasion to be idle, and to live without doing any good works ; neither yet stir us up by any means to do evil things : but contrariwise, if we be not desperate persons, and our hearts harder than stones, they move us to render ourselves unto God wholly ; with all our will, hearts, might, and power to serve him in all good deeds ; obeying his commandments during our lives ; to seek in all things his glory and honor, not our sensual pleasures and vain glory ; evermore dreading willingly to offend such a merciful God and loving Redeemer, in word, thought, or deed. And the said benefits of God, deeply considered, move us for his sake also to be ever ready to give ourselves to our neighbours ; and, as much as lieth in us, to study with all our endeavour to do good to every man.

These be the fruits of true faith :—To do good as much as lieth in us to every man : and, above all things, and in all things, to advance the glory of God : of whom only we have our sanctification, justification, salvation, and redemption ; to whom be ever glory, praise, and honor, world without end. *Amen.*

HOMILY ON SALVATION.

Imputed Righteousness Explained.

IMPUTED righteousness is not God's accounting us righteous when we are not so ; for that would be a false judgment, and utterly inconsistent with the truth, wisdom, and righteousness of the divine nature : but, first, the righteousness of Christ is become ours, by the conveyance which God hath appointed to make it over unto us ; and, then, it is imputed or reckoned for our justification.

For the imputation of Christ's righteousness is not *res vana*, that which may agree with any person in any state and condition ; as if there were no more required to justify the most profligate sinner, but only that God reckon him righteous : no ; but there must be something presupposed in us, either as a qualifica-

tion, condition, or means, that must give us a title to the righteousness of Christ. And that is, as shall appear in the next position, the grace of faith: so that, Christ's righteousness being made ours by faith, God doth then actually impute it to our justification. And, therefore, the righteousness of Jesus Christ is not by God only thought to be ours; but it is ours really and truly, in a law sense. To affirm, that God imputes that to be ours which indeed is not, would be to make it only a putative righteousness, to invade the divine verity, and to lay the imputation of a false and partial judgment upon him. The righteousness of Christ is not ours, because God accounts it to be so; but, on the contrary, therefore God accounts it ours, because it is so. It becomes not ours, by God's imputation; for it must be ours, before any act of imputation can be true and just; but rather, it becomes ours, by divine designation or donation, whereby God hath made over the righteousness of his Son as a dowry and patrimony to faith. God doth not justify us, that we may be righteous; but because we are already righteous: and that, not only imperfectly, by the inherent righteous qualities that are implanted in our regeneration; but most perfectly, by the righteousness of Christ consigned over unto us in our regeneration, by virtue of faith, which is a main part of it. Certainly, that God, who hath told us, that *he that justifieth the wicked is an abomination unto him*, Prov. xvii. 15, will never himself make that the process of his justice. It is true, the Apostle saith, that God *justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. iv. 5; but this must be understood, either in a limited sense, for those who are in part so, being but in part sanctified: or, rather, it must be understood, not in a compounded sense, as if ungodliness and justification were states compatible to the same person; but in a divided sense, that is, that he justifies such who heretofore were ungodly; but their sanctification intervenes between their ungodliness and their justification. In which order the Apostle recounts it, 1 Cor. vi. 11, *Such were some of you: but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified*. So that, in order of nature, faith, which is a principal part of our sanctification, precedes our right to Christ's righteousness, because it conveys it; and our right to Christ's righteousness precedes God's ac-

tual imputation of it to our justification, because it must first be ours, before it can be with truth accounted so

It is very wonderful, that the Papists should so obstinately resolve not to understand this doctrine of imputed righteousness; but still cavil against it, as a contradiction. It being, say they, as utterly impossible to become righteous through the righteousness of another, as to become healthful through another's health, or wise by another's wisdom. And some, besides this slander of a contradiction, give us this scoff into the bargain: That the Protestants, in defending an imputative righteousness, shew only an imputative modesty and imputative learning. But they might do well to consider that some denominations are physical; others only legal and juridical. Those, which are physical, do indeed necessarily require in-existent forms, from which the denominations should result: thus, to be healthful, and to be wise and learned, do require inherent health, wisdom, and learning. But, to be righteous, may be taken either in a physical sense, and so it denotes an inherent righteousness, which in the best is imperfect; or else it may be taken in a forensic or juridical sense, and so the perfect righteousness of another, who is our Surety, may become ours, and be imputed to our justification. It is the righteousness of another, personally: it is our righteousness, juridically: because, by faith, we have a right and title to it; which right and title accrue unto us, by the promise and covenant of God, and our union to our Surety.

Indeed, some there are, who refer our justification wholly to the merits of Jesus Christ; but yet lay down a scheme and method of this doctrine, not altogether so honorable to our blessed Saviour as they ought. These affirm, that Christ, by his righteousness, hath merited that God should account our faith to be itself our righteousness: that his is only the procaccarctic or meritorious cause procuring this grand privilege to faith, that it should itself be our righteousness and the matter of our justification. Wherein they are so far injurious to the merits of our blessed Saviour, as to make them only the remote cause of our justification; and, consequently, necessary, rather that faith might have an object, than that we might have righteousness. However, this, which hath

been spoken, may serve to give us a more clear and distinct notion of imputed righteousness; which is not ours, merely because God imputes it to us; but because he hath, by deed of gift in his promise, bestowed it upon us when we believe, and then imputes it to our justification.

BP. HOPKINS.

The Imputation of Christ's Righteousness agreeable to Scripture, and to the Doctrine of the Church of England.

THOUGH you are pleased to say, That neither our Church, nor Scripture, say any thing of such imputation; yet I shall, in short, say a few things, which, if impartially considered, may possibly convince you of error in this particular, or abate your confidence in asserting it. And here consider,

1. What the 11th Article of our Church says: We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of Christ Jesus, by faith. 1. Here it is to be considered, that the word *λογίζεσθαι*, which occurs eleven times in one chapter, Rom. iv. is, by the Latin translators and expositors, rendered sometimes by *imputare*, or *reputare*, or *adjudicare*, or *æstimare*. And by our church counted, (so our English version, (Rom. iv. 3. 5.) accounted, (Art. 11.) or reckoned (Rom. iv. 4, 9, 10.) So that in the judgment of our church, these three words are synonymous, and signify the same thing in our English idiom, that *λογίζεσθαι* does in the Greek, or *imputare*, or *reputare* in the Latin. 2. By the merits of Christ Jesus, in the Article, his justice is understood; in that by his meritorious death and passion, he satisfied the Father's justice for us, and paid the full price of our redemption.* 3. When our Article says, That we are accounted righteous before God, it is certain, that as God only justifies, Rom. viii. 33. iv. 5., so it is he only who counts, accounts, and reckons us righteous, and *imputes*, Rom. iv. 6. (which word I omitted a little before,) Christ's righteousness to us, by which alone we can be justified *coram Deo*. 4. That the true sense, then, and meaning of our Article is evidently this: God, who only justifies, imputes his Son's justice or righteousness to us, for whom only he performed it; and for it, accounts or reckons us just before himself at his tribunal.

* So our Homily explains it, in the 1st part of the Sermon of Salvation, p. 14.

This imputing, or accounting our blessed Saviour's righteousness to believing Christians for their justification, is fully expressed in our Homily of Salvation, in the conclusion of it, thus, 'So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them who truly believe in him. He for them paid their ransom, by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life; so that in and by him, every true Christian may be called a fulfiller of the law; for as much as what they lacked, Christ's justice hath supplied.' (Hom. of Salvation, part 1. page 15). By the premises, I think it may be manifest, that Christ is our righteousness; and the text expressly says, Jer. xxiii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 30., that his righteousness is ours; and so far ours, that his justice hath supplied the want of our righteousness: and we are looked upon by our gracious Father, in and by Christ Jesus, and for his justice performed for us, as if we had perfectly fulfilled the law; and so, by and for his righteousness we are, *coram Deo*, justified. Now it is manifest that this righteousness of our blessed Saviour and Surety cannot possibly be ours by infusion; men neither are, nor can be the subject of it, and therefore it must, of necessity, be ours by imputation only; God accepting it for us, and graciously imputing it to us.

2. And what our church, and all reformed churches, say concerning the imputation of our blessed Saviour's righteousness, they have evident ground in Scripture for it, and that in both the New and Old Testament. This righteousness (for of it St. Paul speaks,) *being testified by the law and the prophets*; Rom. iii. 21. That this, which you unadvisedly deny, may further appear, I consider, 1. That the righteousness we are speaking of, is that which justifies, not *coram hominibus*, but *coram Deo*; and, 2. This righteousness may be two-fold. 1. *Justitia operum*, a righteousness internal and inherent in the subject it justifies; and is therefore called our own righteousness, being the effect and product of our own works; so the holy angels are, and Adam, while he stood, was just. 2. *Justitia Gratiæ*, Rom. iii. 24. *et imputata*, Rom. iv. 3, 5, &c. which is external, and not inherent in the subject it denominates and constitutes just. So we say, that our blessed Saviour's righteousness, though in him, and external to us, is imputed to believing sinners. And this imputed righteousness is in Scripture

called, 1. *Justitia fidei*, Rom. iv. 13; ix. 30, 32; x. 6. because faith is that which alone receives, and makes it ours, John i. 12; Rom. iii. 22, 25. 2. It is usually called *Justitia Dei*; Rom. i. 17; iii. 22; x. 3; Phil. iii. 9. because God sent his Son to die for us, accepts his sacrifice of himself, and the satisfaction given by it, and imputes it to us, Rom. iv. 6. So that by it, he is reconciled to us, does not impute our sins to us,* but, for his Son's sacrifice and satisfaction, absolves and justifies us. 3. It is called *Justitia Christi*; because it was wrought in, and by him, but for us. For all his obedience, active and passive, which as man, and our mediator, he performed, was to free us from sin, and the punishment of it. It was for us, and our salvation, he came† down and died, John iii. 15, 16. He was the Lamb of God, John i. 29. ὁ αἰψων, qui tulit, pertulit, abstulit, who has taken away our sins. He was, by his Father's, (2 Cor. v. 21) and his own, (Heb. x. 7) will and consent, made a sacrifice for our sins;‡ and did not only bear our sins, i. e. *pœnas peccatis debitas*, but he put them away, Heb. ix. 28. and abolished them, Heb. ix. 26. purchased reconciliation, and peace with God, Col. i. 20. which was presignified expressly in the law, Lev. xvi. 21, 22; 2 Chron. xxix. 24. *So that we have redemption by his blood, even the remission of our sins*, Col. i. 14. Rom. iii. 24, 25; Eph. i. 7. That is, by and for our blessed Saviour's satisfaction, we are absolved from our sins, and *coram Deo* justified. Our blessed Saviour, as the Apostle tells us, *humbled himself and became obedient unto death, wherefore God hath highly exalted him*, &c. Phil. ii. 8. This obedience of Jesus Christ, so highly pleasing to his Father, was that righteousness which he performed himself, but for us, as our Surety and Mediator. He had undertaken to pay our debt, by undergoing the punishment due to us, and he fully and justly paid it: and this his justice, being the justice of our surety, and performed only for us, became ours, and we, by it, justified *coram Deo*: it being impossible that our just God should condemn, or require of us that debt, which our Surety and Saviour had fully paid. And for the further evidencing the impu-

tation of our blessed Saviour's righteousness for our justification; it is to be considered,

3. That he is called our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. because his satisfaction given to his Father's justice for our sins, accepted of God, and imputed to us, is made our righteousness, by which we are justified. Whence it is, that the Apostle says, *We are justified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. not by works, and *by faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 25. and *through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24. It is not any works, or inherent righteousness in us; but his righteousness, by and for which we have remission of our sins, and consequently justification. And if you desire to know how this righteousness of our blessed Saviour and Surety becomes ours? the Apostle tells you, it is God who makes it so. *Of him are ye in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness*, &c. 1 Cor. i. 30. It is certain, and by learned men confessed, that those words, ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, must be repeated ἐκ κοινοῦ, with every one of those words σοφία ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, and δικαιοσύνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, &c. The righteousness of our blessed Saviour was by him, as our surety, performed only for us, and by his heavenly Father accepted, reckoned, or imputed to us, and is the only cause and motive for which he justifies us.

4. If Titius owe you a thousand pounds upon bond, and Sempronius be bound with him for the payment of it: suppose Titius be insolvent, having nothing, or not near enough, to pay that sum, and be laid in prison. If in this case Sempronius, his surety, pay that whole sum, this payment performed by his surety will, and in law and justice must, be imputed to Titius, and absolutely free him from that debt and imprisonment: and if he be brought before the judge for non-payment of that money, he must, for what his surety has done for him, be *coram judice* absolved and justified. We are all sinners (the case, as to the justice and equity of it, is the same), and so become slaves to sin, and in captivity to Satan; we have contracted a great debt, *debitum pœnæ æternæ*, which is impossible for us ever to pay. Our blessed Saviour is our surety,* and pays our whole debt, and the full price of our redemption, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; which being paid solely

* 2 Cor. v. 19. And so our Homily, pt. 2. page 183. in the Second Sermon of the Passion.

† Ita Symbolum Constantinopolitanum.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 21. Ἀμαρτία, i. e. περὶ ἁμαρτίας, Sacrificium pro peccato.

* Heb. vii. 22. κρείττονος διαθήκης γέγονεν ἑγγυος ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

and only for us (for our blessed Redeemer had no debt of his own to pay, save only as our surety), this payment, though performed by another, is imputed to us; so as we have the benefit of it, and being free from sin and punishment, are, *coram Deo*, justified. And that you may see how inconsiderately you say, that Scripture has nothing of our blessed Saviour's imputed righteousness, I desire you to consider,

5. That the evangelical prophet Isaiah, speaking of our blessed Saviour, hath these words: *He (Jesus Christ) hath borne our grief, and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* And it follows, *The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, Isa. liii. 4-6. And a little after, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*, ver. 8. Where I shall only observe, what is evidently in the text, these four particulars,

1. That God imputed our sins to his Son, *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*; and *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*, &c.

2. That they were imputed to him, *Non quoad culpam, sed pœnam*. He was absolutely innocent; it was our iniquities and our transgressions. We only were the sinful cause and subject of those sins. The sins were only ours, and the punishment and suffering for them only his.

3. And as God imputed our sins to our blessed Saviour, *quoad pœnam*, so that he suffered the punishment due to us for them; so he imputeth our Saviour's sufferings and satisfaction to us, *quoad beneficium et justitiam*. So that by and for his sufferings and the righteousness of his satisfaction, we receive absolution, remission of our sins, and justification. For so the text tells us, *By his stripes we are healed*. Our sins are wounds and sicknesses of our soul, and his merits, applied by a lively faith, the only plaster and physic which could cure them. It is not our works or any inherent righteousness, which can cure and justify us; but it must be a righteousness imputed by God. *That man is blessed, or justified*, says the Apostle, *unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works*, Rom. iv. 6. And that righteousness which God thus imputes, is not, as I said, any inherent righteousness of our works; but the righteousness of his Son and our blessed Saviour; *whom God hath set forth to be*

a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of our sins, Rom. iii. 24, 25. 20. It is his imputed righteousness, not any works of ours, for which we have remission of our sins, or justification before God. 'Sicut Christo, inobedientiæ nostræ sibi a Deo imputatæ, supplicium, et pœna; ita nobis obedientiæ Christi nobis imputatæ, Beneficium et justitia cessit.' The Apostle expressly says the same thing: *God hath made him (his Son) to be sin (that is, a sacrifice for sin) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.** Our sins were imputed to him by God, that his righteousness, which alone is called the righteousness of God, might be made ours. . . .

4. It follows in that place of Isaiah thus, *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities*, Isa. liii. 11. 1. His knowledge (non effectivè aut subjectivè, cujus Christus est principium et subjectum). Not that knowledge inherent in him, of which he is the subject and principle; but his knowledge *objectivè*, or the knowledge of him, of which he is the object, that is, our knowledge of him by a lively faith: which our blessed Saviour means, where he saith, *This is eternal life to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ*, John xvii. 3. 2. *My righteous servant*. There is in our blessed Saviour a two-fold righteousness; (1.) *Justitia absoluta*, which is his personal righteousness, as the Son of God; whether by an eternal or temporal generation: the first, his righteousness as God; the second, as man. For, as man, he was the Son of God, made under the law, Luke i. 35. and by the obligation of the natural or moral law, bound to fulfil all the righteousness required by that law, and that for himself. (2.) *Justitia relativa*, his righteousness, as he was our surety; and so his righteousness did consist in exactly doing and suffering all those things his Father required, and he undertook to do and suffer for us as our surety. And this is that righteousness which is imputed to us for our justification, *coram Deo*. 3. When the text says, *He shall bear our iniquities*; the meaning is, he shall bear the punishment due to us for our iniquities.

* 2 Cor. v. 21. On which place Isidore Clarius, although a Papist, says thus: Pro nobis filium peccatum fecit, id est hostiam pro peccato; ut nos efficeremur justitia Dei in eo. Ille est, ut nos efficeremur justi apud Deum, per ipsum Christum.

So that the prophet, in plain English, says thus: 'My righteous servant, or surety for my people, shall by his knowledge, or a lively faith in him, justify many; for he shall bear, and (for them) suffer the punishment otherwise due to them for their sins.' Where the sufferings and satisfaction of our blessed Saviour, which, as our surety, he perfectly accomplished for us, are by the prophet assigned for the only cause and meritorious motive of our justification. This granted, (as of necessity it must,) I argue thus, That external righteousness, for which alone we are justified *coram Deo*, must of necessity be imputed to us; for being external, and no way inherent in us, it cannot any other way affect us, so that we can have the benefit of it, save only by imputation. But the righteousness of our blessed Saviour and Surety is an external righteousness, for which alone we are justified *coram Deo*; ergo, it is and must be imputed to us, Q. E. D.

5. Lastly, Though you confidently say, 'That there is nothing in Scripture to prove that our blessed Saviour's righteousness is imputed to us for our justification;' yet had you diligently read and understood that one chapter, and the few verses of it here cited in the margin, Rom. v. 15-19. you would or might have found reason enough to have abated your great confidence, and rectified your dangerous mistake; and, upon second thoughts, I hope you will. In this place, the Apostle institutes a collation between Adam, the type, Rom. v. 14. and our blessed Saviour, the antitype, or between the first and second Adam, as the Apostle elsewhere calls them, 1 Cor. xv. 45, &c. By the first, we have sin and condemnation; by the second, our blessed Saviour, grace, and the gift of grace, righteousness and justification.* The words of the Apostle, which, amongst others, may deserve your consideration, are these: *As by one offence (or the offence of one, of Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by one righteousness (or the righteousness of one, of Jesus Christ) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.* And then it follows, *As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience† of one shall*

many be made righteous. Whence, I conceive it evident, that it is not our own works or obedience, but the obedience and righteousness of our blessed Saviour and Surety, performed only for us, (for that innocent Lamb having no sins of his own, died only for ours,) by which we are justified before God. And seeing this righteousness and obedience is extrinsic to us, our blessed Saviour being both the principle and subject of it, it can be no way ours, but only by imputation. And hence it follows, that we are justified before God by no inherent, but only by our blessed Saviour and Surety's imputed righteousness, Q. E. D. BP. BARLOW.

The Uses to be made of the Doctrine of Christ's Righteousness Imputed.

Now of this doctrine of *justification by Christ's righteousness imputed* we may make a double use. First, it may teach us that great duty of self-denial: we see no righteousness will justify us but Christ's, and *his* will not consist but with the denial of our own. And surely whatever the professions of men in word may be, there is not any one duty in all Christian religion of more difficulty than this, to trust Christ only with our salvation. To do holy duties of hearing, reading, praying, meditating, alms-giving, or any other actions of charity or devotion, and yet still to abhor ourselves and our works; to esteem ourselves, after we have done all, unprofitable servants, and worthy of many stripes; to do good things, and not to rest in them; to own the shame and dung of our solemn services: when we have done all the good works we can, to say with Nehemiah, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy*, Nehem. xiii. 22. and with David, *To thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for Thou renderest to every man according to his work*, Psal. lxii. 12. It is thy mercy to reward us according to the uprightness of our works, who mightest in judgment confound us for the imperfection of our works. To give God the praise of our working, and to take to ourselves the shame of polluting his works in us. There is no doctrine so diametrically contrary to the merits of Christ, and the redemption of the world thereby, as justification by works. No Papist in the world is or can be more con-

* Rom. v. ubi donum Gratiae, ver. 15. est Remissio peccati, ver. 16. et justitia Christi, ver. 17.

† Obedience to death, even the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 8. which was properly the obedience of Christ as our Surety and Mediator, performed not for himself, but only for us.

tentious for good works than we both in our doctrine and in our prayers, and in our exhortations to the people. We say, no faith justifieth us before God but a working faith, no man is righteous in the sight of men, nor to be esteemed, but by works of holiness; without holiness no man shall see God; he that is Christ's is zealous of good works, purifieth himself even as he is pure, and walketh as he did in this world. Here only is the difference: we do them, because they are our duty, and testifications of our love and thankfulness to Christ, and of the workings of his Spirit in our hearts; but we dare not trust in them, as that by which we hope to stand or fall before the tribunal of God's justice, because they are at best mingled with our corruptions, and therefore do themselves stand in need of a high-priest to take off their iniquity. We know enough in Christ to depend on, we never can find enough in ourselves. And this confidence we have, if God would ever have had us justified by works, he would have given us grace enough to fulfil the whole law, and not have left a prayer upon public record for us every day to repeat, and to regulate all our own prayers by, *Forgive us our trespasses*. For how dares that man say, I shall be justified by my works, who must every day say, *Lord forgive me my sins, and be merciful unto me a sinner*. Nay though we could fulfil the whole law perfectly, yet from the guilt of sins formerly contracted we could no other way be justified, than by laying hold by faith on the satisfaction and sufferings of Christ.

Secondly, it may teach us confidence against all sins, corruptions, and temptations. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, &c.* Satan is the blackest enemy, and sin is the worst thing he can allege against me, or my soul is or can be subject unto; for *Hell is not so evil as sin*. Inasmuch as hell is of God's making, but sin only of mine; hell is made against me, but sin is committed against God. Now I know Christ came to destroy the works, and to answer the arguments and reasonings of the devil: thou canst not stand before God, saith Satan, for thou art a grievous sinner, and he is a devouring fire. But faith can answer, Christ is able both to cover and to cure my sin, to make it vanish as a mist, and

to put it as far out of mine own sight, as the east is from the west. But thou hast nothing to do with Christ, thy sins are so many and so foul. Surely the blood of Christ is more acceptable to my soul and much more honorable and precious in itself, when it covereth a multitude of sins. Paul was a persecutor, a blasphemer, and injurious, the greatest of all sinners; and yet he obtained mercy, that he might be for a pattern of all long-suffering to those that should after believe in Christ. If I had as much sin upon my soul as thou hast, yet faith could unlade them all upon Christ, and Christ could swallow them all up in his mercy. But thou hast still nothing to do with him, because thou continuest in thy sin. But doth he not call me, invite me, beseech me, command me to come unto him? If then I have a heart to answer his call, he hath a hand to draw me to himself, though all the gates of hell, and powers of darkness, or sins of the world stood between. But thou obeyest not this call. True indeed and pitiful it is, that I am dull of hearing, and slow of following the voice of Christ; I want much faith: but yet, Lord, thou dost not use to quench the smoking flax, or to break the bruised reed; I believe, and thou art able to help my unbelief. I am resolved to venture my soul upon thy mercy, to throw away all mine own loading, and to cleave only to this plank of salvation. But faith purifieth the heart, whereas thou art unclean still. True indeed, and miserable man I am therefore, that the motions of sin do work in my members. But yet, Lord, I hate every false heart; I delight in thy law with mine inner man; I do that which I would not, but I consent to thy law that it is good; I desire to know thy will, to fear thy name, and to follow thee whithersoever thou leadest me. But these are but empty velleities, the wishings and wouldings of an evil heart. Lord, to me belongeth the shame of my failings; but to thee belongeth the glory of thy mercy and forgiveness. Too true it is that I do not all I should: but do I allow myself in any thing that I should not? do I make use of mine infirmities to justify myself by them, or shelter myself under them, or dispense with myself in them? Though I do not the things I should, yet I love them, and delight in them; my heart, and spirit, and all the desires of my soul are towards them; I hate, abhor, and fight with myself for not doing them. I am ashamed of

mine infirmities, as the blemishes of my profession; I am weary of them, and groan under them as the burdens of my soul; I have no lust, but I am willing to know it; and when I know, to crucify it. I hear of no further measure of grace, but I admire it, and hunger after it, and press on to it. I can take Christ and affliction, Christ and persecution together. I can take Christ without the world, I can take Christ without myself. I have no unjust gain, but I am ready to restore it. No time have I lost by earthly business from God's service, but I am ready to redeem it. I have followed no sinful pleasure, but I am ready to abandon it, no evil company but I mightily abhor it. I never swear an oath, but I can remember it with a bleeding conscience; I never neglected a duty but I can recount it with revenge and indignation. I do not in any man see the image of Christ, but I love him the more dearly for it, and abhor myself for being so much unlike it. I know, Satan, I shall speed never the worse with God, because I have thee for mine enemy. I know I shall speed much the better, because I have myself for mine enemy. Certainly he that can take Christ offered, that can in all points admit him, as well to purify as to justify, as well to rule as save, as well his grace as his mercy, need not fear all the powers of darkness, nor all the armies of the foulest sins which Satan can charge his conscience withal.

BR. REYNOLDS.

Inherent Righteousness cannot justify us.

IF indeed we have our *fruit in holiness*, notwithstanding we must note, that the more we abound therein, the more need we have to crave that we may be strengthened and supported: our very virtues may be snares unto us. The enemy, that waiteth for all occasions to work our ruin, hath found it harder to overthrow an humble sinner, than a proud saint. There is no man's case so dangerous, as his whom Satan hath persuaded that his own righteousness shall present him pure and blameless in the sight of God. If we could say we were not guilty of any thing at all in our consciences, (we know ourselves far from this innocency; we cannot say, we know nothing by ourselves; but if we could) should we therefore plead not guilty before the presence of our Judge, that sees further into our hearts than we

ourselves can do? If our hands did never offer violence to our brethren, a bloody thought doth prove us murderers before him: if we had never opened our mouth to utter any scandalous, offensive, or hurtful word, the cry of our secret cogitations is heard in the ears of God. If we did not commit the sins, which daily and hourly, either in deed, word, or thoughts we do commit; yet in the good things which we do, how many defects are there intermingled! God, in that which is done, respecteth the mind and intention of the doer. Cut off then all those things wherein we have regarded our own glory, those things which men do to please men, and to satisfy our own liking, those things which we do for any by-respect, not sincerely and purely for the love of God—and a small score will serve for the number of our righteous deeds. Let the holiest and best things which we do be considered: we are never better affected unto God than when we pray; yet when we pray, how are our affections many times distracted! How little reverence do we shew unto the grand Majesty of God, unto whom we speak! How little remorse of our own miseries! How little taste of the sweet influence of his tender mercies do we feel! Are we not as unwilling many times to begin, and as glad to make an end, as if, in saying *Call upon me*, he had set us a very burdensome task? It may seem somewhat extreme, which I will speak; therefore let every one judge of it, even as his own heart shall tell him, and no otherwise; I will but only make a demand: If God should yield unto us, not as unto Abraham, if fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, yea, or if ten good persons could be found in a city, for their sakes the city should not be destroyed; but, and if he should make us an offer thus large; search all the generations of men since the fall of our father Adam, find one man, that hath done one action, which hath passed from him pure, without any stain or blemish at all; and for that one man's only action, neither man nor angel shall feel the torments which are prepared for both. Do you think that this ransom, to deliver men and angels, could be found to be among the sons of men? The best things which we do, have somewhat in them to be pardoned. How then can we do any thing meritorious, or worthy to be rewarded? Indeed, God doth liberally

promise whatsoever appertaineth to a blessed life, to as many as sincerely keep his law, though they be not exactly able to keep it. Wherefore we acknowledge a dutiful necessity of doing well; but the meritorious dignity of doing well, we utterly renounce. We see how far we are from the perfect righteousness of the law; the little fruit which we have in holiness, it is, God knoweth, corrupt and unsound: we put no confidence at all in it, we challenge nothing in the world for it, we dare not call God to reckoning, as if we had him in our debt-books: our continual suit to him is, and must be, to bear with our infirmities, and pardon our offences.

HOOKE.

Faith Justifies Instrumentally.

1. FAITH doth not justify us, as it is in itself a work or act exerted by us.

It is true, the Apostle tells us, that Abraham's faith *was imputed to him for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 22: but this cannot be understood literally and properly, as if the very act of believing were his righteousness; for then it would contradict many other places of Scripture, asserting that Christ Jesus is our righteousness. It must therefore be taken tropically, as relating to Christ: that is, faith is our righteousness no otherwise, than as it makes over the righteousness of Christ unto us; and not as it is in itself a work or grace. For, did it justify us as a work, then the Apostle had very incongruously opposed him that worketh, to him that believeth, *To him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5: for were faith our righteousness as a work, then he, that believeth, would be he, that worketh; and his work would be accounted to him for righteousness. Neither, indeed, is it any whit less absurd, to think that our faith, which is an imperfect grace, can yet be a perfect and complete righteousness: for faith itself hath its manifold failings, and is, as one saith well, like the hand which Moses stretched out in working of miracles; for, as that hand^a was smitten with leprosy, to shew that it was no efficacy in the hand itself that wrought those wonders, so even the faith that justifies hath a leprosy, an uncleanness cleaving to it, to shew that it justifies not by its own virtue, not as it is a work and act of ours, for so itself needeth justification.

2. Neither doth faith justify, as it is the fulfilling of the condition of the covenant of grace: *He that believeth shall be saved*.

For, as I have observed before, faith is not properly and immediately the condition of this covenant, but remotely and secondarily. For we must resolve this covenant thus: He, that can produce a perfect righteousness, shall be saved; but he, that believes, shall have the perfect righteousness of Christ made his: so, from the first to the last, *He that believeth shall be saved*. Where it is to be noted, that faith is not made the immediate condition of salvation; but only it is the immediate condition of obtaining an interest in a perfect righteousness, by which we are justified and saved.

3. Faith justifying neither as a work nor as a condition, and therefore not as being itself our righteousness, it remains that it must needs justify, as it gives us a right and title to the righteousness of another, even of Jesus Christ. So that we are not so properly justified by faith, as by the righteousness which faith apprehends and applies: for the righteousness of Christ being made ours, God is engaged in justice to justify us, because then we are righteous persons. This virtue, that faith hath to justify, is not its own; neither proceeds from itself, but from the object, which it apprehends and makes ours, viz. the righteousness of Christ by which we are justified, directly and immediately; but by faith, only correlatively and metonymically, as it relates unto the righteousness of Christ. When the woman was healed only by touching of Christ's garments, the virtue that healed her proceeded not from her touch, but from him whom she touched: yet our Saviour tells her, that her faith had made her whole, Matt. ix. 22; which can no more be properly understood of her faith, than of her touch; for still the healing virtue was from Christ, conveyed to her by her faith, and that faith testified by her touch: so, when we say that we are justified by faith, we must understand that faith doth it not through its own virtue, but by virtue of Christ's righteousness, which is conveyed to us by our faith. This righteousness of Christ, as I observed before, is both a righteousness of satisfaction and of obedience; for we need both unto our justification; and these must be made ours, or else we can never be justified by them:

ours, they cannot be naturally, as wrought out by ourselves; consequently, they must be ours legally, and by imputation; the law looking upon what our Surety hath done, as though he had done it, and accordingly dealing with us. Now if we can but apprehend how faith makes the righteousness of Christ to be ours, it will be very easy and obvious to apprehend the way and manner how we are justified.

4. To clear up this, therefore, faith makes the righteousness of Christ's satisfaction and obedience to be ours, as it is the bond of that mystical union, that there is between Christ and the believing soul. If Christ and the believer be one, the righteousness of Christ may well be reckoned as the righteousness of the believer. Nay, mutual imputation flows from mystical union: the sins of believers are imputed to Christ, and the righteousness of Christ to them; and both justly, because being united each to other by mutual consent, (which consent on our part is faith,) God considers them but as one person. As it is in marriage, the husband stands liable to the wife's debts, and the wife stands interested in the husband's possessions; so it is here: faith is the marriage-band and tie between Christ and a believer; and, therefore, all the debts of a believer are chargeable upon Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is instated upon the believer: so that, upon the account of this marriage-union, he hath a legal right and title to the purchase made by it. Indeed this union is a high and inscrutable mystery; yet plain it is, that there is such close, spiritual, and real union between Christ and a believer: the Scripture often both expressly affirms it, *He, that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17; and also lively illustrates it by several resemblances. It is likewise plain, that the band of this union, on the believer's part, is faith: consult Rom. xi. 17, compared with the 20th verse. And, therefore, from the nearness of this union, there follows a communication of interests and concerns: insomuch, that the Church is called Christ, *So also is Christ*, 1 Cor. xii. 12; and their sufferings called the sufferings of Christ, Col. i. 24. Acts ix. 4. So, likewise, from this mystical union, the sins of believers are laid upon Christ, and his righteousness imputed unto them: see this as to both parts, *He hath made*

him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21; and Gal. iii. 13, 14: *He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; that the blessing of Abraham might come on us*. It is still upon the account of this union, that Christ was reckoned a sinner, and we are reckoned as righteous. And, therefore, as faith is the bond and tie of this union, so it is, without more difficulty, the way and means of our justification: by faith, we are united unto Christ; by that union, we have truly a righteousness; and, upon that righteousness, the justice of God, as well as his mercy, is engaged to justify and acquit us.

And thus you see this great truth explained, of justification by faith; which hath, indeed, been as great a torment and vexation to men's understandings to conceive how it should be, as it hath been peace and quiet to their consciences in the certainty it was so. BR. HOPKINS.

But we are farther to inquire, how faith justifies. Not certainly in that sense, as if God graciously accepts the act of faith, and new Gospel obedience flowing therefrom in the room of the perfect obedience, which, from the rigour of the law, we are bound to perform in order to justification: as the Socinians, and Curcellæus, who imitates them in this respect, explain it; understanding by faith the observance of the precepts of the Gospel, which God has prescribed by Christ. For this is to make void the whole Gospel. The Gospel has not substituted our faith, but Christ's obedience, by which the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, in the room of that perfect obedience, which the law required in order to justification. It is also false, that faith and new obedience are one and the same thing. I own that faith is a virtue or grace, commanded by the law of God, and that a believer, by his very believing, obeys God. I likewise confess, that we are to look upon nothing as a true and living faith, which is not fruitful in good works. But yet faith is one thing, and the obedience flowing from it quite another, especially in the matter of justification, of which we now speak, where Paul always contradistinguishes the obedience of all manner of works to faith. For it is a rash attempt

to confine to a certain species or kind of works what the Apostle says concerning them all in general. The force of truth extorted from Schlichtingius this assertion: 'Faith, in its strict and proper signification, bears the same relation to obedience as the cause to the effect, as the tree to the fruit, as the mother to the daughter,' *contra Meisnerum*, p. 325. In fine, neither the truth nor the justice of God allow our faith and our obedience, which are imperfect, to be admitted as perfect. For, it is the will of God, that the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in our justification, and not that any thing be derogated from it, as we proved § XI.II.

Others think proper to say, that faith is here considered as a condition which the covenant of grace requires of us, in order to our justification. A certain learned divine of ours, in a volume of disputations lately published, speaks thus: 'Nothing can be said with greater probability, simplicity, and more agreeable to Scripture, than that justification is therefore ascribed to faith, because faith is the condition which the Gospel requires of us in order to our being accounted righteous and innocent before God.' And a little after; 'yea, since we affirm that faith alone justifies, we do not intend, that the alone act of believing, taken precisely, as it is opposed to acts of love and hope, and distinguished from repentance, is the condition which the new covenant or the Gospel requires, in order to obtain remission of sin, and be absolved from them on account of Christ. For, the hope of pardon, and love to God, sorrow also for sin, and purpose of a new life; in a word, all the acts, requisite to a genuine and serious conversion, are also somewhat necessary, and altogether prerequisite, in order for any to be received into the favor of God, and from thence forward to be accounted a justified person, yea, that a living faith that works by love, which we affirm alone to justify, includes and implies all these things.' And the learned person imagines these are such truths, as the doctors both of the Romish and reformed schools receive with common consent. He also adds: 'As often as the Apostle affirms, that we are not justified by works, but by faith, he intends nothing else, but that none can, on any account, be justified by such observance of the law as the legal covenant requires, in order to obtain life

thereby, and escape the curse of God; but that God accounts as righteous, and out of mere grace, freely forgives all the sins of those, who with sincerity receive the Gospel, and from faith perform obedience thereto.' These things justly call for our animadversion.

1st. With this very learned person's leave, I doubt whether he can persuade any who is not altogether unskilled in theological matters, that what he has proposed is the received opinion of the reformed school. I find nothing of this in their confessions and catechisms; but there is a great deal which does not differ much from the words of the learned person, in the writings of those, whose heretical principles I from my very heart believe are detestable to him.

2ndly. When the discourse is about the relation which faith bears to justification, the learned person does not seem with sufficient caution to repeat so often *the act of believing*. For it is well known that the reformed churches condemned Arminius and his followers, for saying that faith comes to be considered in the matter of justification as a work or act of ours: whereas the Dutch confession speaks far more accurately; namely, that faith is here instead of an instrument, whereby we are joined together with Christ in a partnership or communion of all his benefits. I am well aware, that this is not very agreeable to the learned person, who maintains, that faith can be said to be the instrument of justification no other way but as it is a kind of condition, prerequisite on our part thereto. But when the Remonstrant apologists, in order to be relieved from that troublesome expression of our confessions, by their softening interpretations wrote, that faith is therefore said to be the instrument of justification, 'as it is a work performed by us according to the command, and by the grace of God; for, a condition, so far as it is performed, may in some measure be said to become a mean or instrument, whereby we obtain the thing promised on such a condition,' *Apolog.* p. 112: *a*; the Reformed protested, that they were displeased with this explication. They deny not, that our master, Christ himself, says, John vi. 29, that *faith is a work*: neither do they refuse that in the matter of justification, the apprehending and receiving Christ is an act of faith; and that faith ought to be so far consi-

dered as active. Yet they deny, that faith justifies as it is an act prescribed by God, (for thus it would stand in the same relation with the other works enjoined by the law,) but they affirm, that we are justified by that act, as by it we apprehend Christ, are united to him, and embrace his righteousness. Which they usually explain by this similitude: a beggar's stretching forth his hand, by which, at the command of a rich man, he receives the free gift of his charity, is the act of the beggar prescribed by the rich; but it does not enrich the beggar, as it is an act, but as by this means he applies the gift to himself, and appropriates, or makes it his own. These things are too evident to be obscured by any quibbles or subtleties whatever.

3dly. Nor do I think it an accurate way of speaking, that faith is the condition, which the Gospel requireth of us in order to be accounted righteous and without guilt before God. The condition of justification, properly speaking, is perfect obedience only: this the law requires; nor does the Gospel substitute any other: but declares that satisfaction has been made to the law by Christ our Surety; moreover, that it is the office of faith to accept that satisfaction offered to it, and by accepting appropriate the same. Which is quite a different thing from saying (as the Socinians and Remonstrants do, and which I know not whether the learned person would choose to say,) that in the room of perfect obedience, which the law prescribed as the condition of justification, the Gospel now requireth faith, as the condition of the same justification. Though some of the Reformed have said, that faith is a *condition, sine qua non, without which we cannot* be justified; yet they were far from being of opinion, that faith is a condition properly so called, on performing which, man should, according to the gracious covenant of God, have a right to justification as to a reward. This is very far from the mind of the truly reformed. See what the celebrated Triglandius has fully, solidly, and perspicuously reasoned against the subtle trifling of the Remonstrants in *Examine Apologia*, c. 20, 21. and Isaac Junius in *Antapologia*, p. 236.

4thly. Neither is it according to the mind of the reformed church, that the acts of hope and love, nay, all those which are required to a true and serious conversion,

are included in justifying faith as justifying, and concur with faith, strictly so called, to justification. When the Remonstrants said in their confession, that 'faith contains in its compass the whole of a man's conversion prescribed by the Gospel: nay, the prescript of faith can here be considered in no other light, than as, by its natural propriety, it includes the obedience of faith, and is as a fruitful parent of good works, and the fountain and source of all Christian piety and holiness,' c. x. § 2, 3. The Leyden professors in their censure remarked, that 'the adversaries, who write in this manner, and throw off the mask, ascribe to faith the *Socinian-Popish* faith of justification, which Peter Bertius, a principal assertor of this, found to be the way to popery.' And this assertion of theirs they make out by solid arguments. And when the Remonstrant apologist foolishly said, that this his opinion differed not from the common doctrine of the reformed churches, the venerable Triglandius replied, that 'it was clearer than noon-day, that this was too barefaced an assertion.' The whole comes to this, that no faith justifies, but that which is living and fruitful in good works; that acts of love and holiness are required, as fruits of faith, as testimonies of Christ dwelling in us, as marks of our regeneration, as what go before salvation, and without which there can be no full assurance of it. But that those acts of love, holiness, and conversion, concur with faith to justification, and are included in justifying faith, as such, is a strange way of speaking to reformed ears, nor agreeable to Scripture, which always, in the matter of justification, sets faith in opposition to all works whatever.

5thly. Some time ago *I read* in Socinus, before the sentiments of this celebrated person came to hand, the same exception which he makes, that, by the works which Paul excludes from justification, is understood the perfect observance of the law, such as the legal covenant requires. For thus he says *de servat.* P. 4. c. 11. 'the works to which faith is opposed are not every kind of works, nor taken and considered in every light, but, as we have observed elsewhere, these works denote an absolute and perpetual observance and performance of the divine law, through the whole course of life.' But our divines openly declared against this exposition; who contend that

all works, however considered, are opposed to faith. The Apostle's words are plain, *he that worketh not, but believeth*; and his mind or intention, as Lubbertus has learnedly observed, is to be considered from the state of the controversy, then in debate. But the state of the controversy was not, whether a man could be justified by a perfect observance of the law, if there was any one who could keep it perfectly?—which none in his senses will deny: or whether there are any, who, since Adam's first sin, have, for the whole of their life, done nothing amiss, but have attained to every perfection both of parts, degrees, and perseverance?—which none in his right mind will affirm. But the matter in question was, whether the Jews could be justified by that observance of the law which they were able to perform. They certainly thought that they could be justified if they only observed the moral law to the utmost of their power, and gave these satisfactions for their failings which the ceremonial law had prescribed. But the Apostle denies this, resting his argument on that maxim, that the righteousness which can be valid at God's tribunal, must be perfect in all its parts: but since none can pretend to any such works, he concludes, that no works, of what kind soever, can contribute any thing to obtain justification. The Apostle, doubtless, excludes those works in which they commonly trusted, who endeavoured to *establish their own righteousness*. But it is not credible, that any of them could say, that he kept himself pure, through the whole course of his life from every even the least stain of sin. These things are evident. . . .

The genuine opinion of the Reformed is this: that faith justifies, as it is the bond of our strictest union with Christ, by which all things that are Christ's become also ours, as we explained § XXXI. Or, which is the same thing, as it is the acceptance of the gift offered, rendering the donation firm and irrevocable. And this is what the Apostle intended when he wrote, Rom. iv. 5, that *faith is counted for righteousness*; that is, faith is judged to be that with which the right of demanding the reward is connected; a way of speaking borrowed from merchants: thus in the book of God's accounts is set down what he hath given to us, and what we are indebted to him. But when in the other

page, our complete obedience, and the payment of the debt could not be inserted, what then is written there, viz. to balance the account? In the first place, our righteousness, or the rightness of Christ wrought out for us: then* our faith, by which we receive that righteousness offered to us, and present it to God as ours.

WITSIVS.

Faith continues our Justification as well as Justifies.

AND as it is on all sides confessed that, at first, faith only justifies; so it continues our justification. *By faith we stand*, or continue justified, says the Apostle, Rom. xi. 20: and elsewhere, *We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. *It is the shield by which we quench all the fiery darts of the devil, and overcome the world*, Eph. vi. 16: *nor is it only victorious, but (ἡ νίκη) victory itself*, 1 John v. 4, 5. Now, that which makes us stand in a justified estate, that by which we are kept unto salvation, and by which we are victorious and conquerors over the world, and sin, and Satan—that, I say, continues our righteousness; for if that be not continued, it is impossible we should stand, be kept unto salvation, or conquer: but this faith only does, and not works; ergo, it is faith which continues our justification. Again, *By faith we are regenerate and become the sons of God*, John i. 12. Gal. iii. 26; *it is our spiritual life*, Gal. ii. 20. Heb. x. 38; *and that life is eternal*, John xvii. 3; *so that we cannot perish*, John iii. 16. xi. 26. Whence we may evidently conclude, That which continues us in an estate in which we cannot perish, continues our justification; for if that be not continued, we certainly perish; but it is faith which so continues us: ergo, and further, As it is certain and confessed, that the merits and satisfaction of our blessed Saviour, apprehended and applied by a lively faith, is that only which at first does or can justify us, *coram Deo*, from all sins past; so it is as certain, that such satisfaction, so applied, will justify us from all succeeding and future sins, as they come. For if such satisfaction, so applied,

* The author does not here mean, that faith, as an act of ours, justifies: for he has sufficiently explained himself on that head: he only mentions faith here as the instrument by which we lay hold on Christ's righteousness, whereby our debt, both of duty and punishment, is fully paid.

was sufficient to cure all the wounds of our soul, and take away all our past sins, and that at once and altogether, without the concurrence of works; then certainly the same satisfaction, applied by the same faith, will be sufficient, and the only means to take away single sins, as, *pro futuro*, they come to be committed. And then we shall not only at first owe our justification, but the continuation of it also, to faith apprehending and applying our blessed Saviour's merits and justification. And this may further appear by the collation and analogy between the brazen serpent erected by Moses in the wilderness, Numb. xxi. 9. &c.; and our blessed Saviour crucified, the type and the antitype, thus set down by St. John, as explained by our blessed Saviour: *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life*, John iii. 14, 15. Where I observe, (1.) That, as they whose bodies were bit by the fiery serpents, were cured of their bodily diseases, to a temporal life, by looking on that serpent with their corporeal eyes; so they whose souls are bit by the old serpent, the devil, are cured of their spiritual wounds, to eternal life, by looking on our blessed Saviour crucified, with the spiritual eye of faith, or, as the text explains it, by believing on him. (2.) And as their looking on the brazen serpent, if they were bit twenty times, cured them, nor was there any other way appointed by God to do it, so as by that means not only the first, but the second, third, and twentieth biting was perfectly cured; so, by looking on our blessed Saviour crucified, with the eye of faith, not only the first biting, or sin of our souls, but all our sins successively, be they ever so many, may be cured, that is, pardoned, by that means; nor is there any other name or means under heaven given, by which we can be cured, or saved from our sins, and so justified. He is the only propitiation for our sins, nor can that propitiation be made ours, so as to have the benefit of it, by any other means, than by apprehending and applying it, by a lively and fruitful faith. And further, this is the express doctrine of our church in her homily; where, speaking of the passion and satisfaction of our blessed Saviour, applied by faith, it follows—In this standeth the continual pardon of our daily offences; in this resteth our justification; in this we be

allowed, &c. The continual pardon of our daily offences, and therefore our justification, standing, resting, or depending, upon the merits and satisfaction of our blessed Saviour, applied and made ours by faith, the only means of such application, it evidently follows, that faith is not only the means of our justification, at first, which you grant, but also of our continuation in it.—Seeing the same faith, which procured pardon at first, procures also continual pardon of all offences which follow.

BP. BARLOW.

By the Righteousness of Faith St. Paul means Christ's Righteousness imputed by Faith.

THAT I may give you further information and satisfaction, in this article of Justification by Faith, it is to be considered, that faith, hope, love, fear, &c. are, in Scripture, as in other good authors, usually put for their objects. So God is called *our hope*, Jer. xvii. 7. 13, 14. 17; and Christ *our hope*, 1 Tim. i. 7. *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. The fear of Isaac; that is, the object of hope, love, and fear. *If I have made gold my hope*, Job xxxi. 24; that is, the object of my hope. So that famous saying of Ignatius, mentioned by Eusebius, *ὁ ἐμὸς ἐπὶ ἐραυόμεναι*; my love, that is, Christ, whom I love, is crucified. So St. Paul is said to *preach the faith*, Gal. i. 23; that is, Christ, and the Gospel, the objects of faith. And hence is that common distinction amongst the schoolmen and divines, *Fides quæ credimus, et fides quam credimus*, or the object of our faith. So that when St. Paul speaks of our justification *coram Deo*, and says, that *faith is accounted for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5; and that *righteousness imputed by God*, Rom. iv. 6; by faith here, its object Christ Jesus, his sufferings and satisfaction, is and must be meant. For *He is our righteousness, which God imputes and makes ours*, 1 Cor. i. 30. For *we are justified* (*coram Deo*) *only through the redemption which is ἐν Χριστῷ*, in or by Jesus Christ, or by his blood, Rom. iii. 24. So the Apostle says, that *we are justified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. So that it is our blessed Saviour's blood, and the redemption and pardon of our sins purchased by it, which justifies us *coram Deo*. But this blood and redemption of our blessed Saviour must be applied and made ours by faith only; and *ergo*, the same

Apostle says expressly, that *we are justified through faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 25; *Christus remissionem peccati et justificationem morte impetrat, fides sola applicat*. Now, although man, by the hand of faith, receive Christ and his righteousness, yet he can be no more said to justify himself *coram Deo*, than a beggar can be said to enrich himself, who receives a thousand pounds freely given him by his benefactor. For as it is not the beggar's hand, which receives, but the money received, which is riches; so it is not the hand of faith which receives Christ's righteousness, but the righteousness received, which justifies us *coram Deo*: and this the rather, because the beggar had, by nature, a hand to receive his benefactor's benevolence; but our most gracious God gives both *his Son*, John iii. 26, who is *our Righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30; and he gives us *faith* too, Eph. ii. 8, which is the hand to receive it.

BR. BARLOW.

Distinction but inseparable Union between Justification and Sanctification.

Now follows the benefit, ease and rest to thy soul; *I will ease you, or give you rest*; that is, I will free you of your burden, I will ease you of your sin, I will acquit you. And this is that we call justification of a sinner, which is an absolution or remission of sins by the only merits and satisfaction of Christ accepted for us and imputed to us: an acquitting and cancelling of all bonds and obligations of transgression for Christ's sake, through the only merit of his death, passion, and shedding of his blood. For he that hath right to Christ, hath right in Christ to be partaker of his righteousness, and of whatsoever satisfaction he hath undergone for the sins of mankind; whereby he is justified, that is, acquit before God of the guilt of sin, and of the punishment according to the law due for the same. For *God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. For *as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many are made righteous*, Rom. v. 19.

This is the ease, this is the rest here mentioned, the unlading and unburdening of a sinner, where Christ dischargeth him of his loading, and beareth it upon his own back. For *he hath borne our griefs, and*

carried our sorrows: He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed—The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all, Isaiah liii. 4, 5, 6. Thus he eased Peter, when his heart was ready to break for denying him: thus he eased Mary Magdalen, a woman laden with sins, when she *bathed his feet with tears*, Luke vii. 48. Thus he refreshed trembling Saul, the persecutor, Acts ix. 6. And still he casteth the eyes of his mercy upon every one that is *poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word*, Isaiah lxvi. 2.

See therefore here to whom alone a troubled soul is to have recourse for ease. Neither to angels nor archangels: for those who do so, *hold not the Head*, Col. ii. 19. Neither to saints nor martyrs, to Peter nor Paul, no not to the blessed virgin herself: for *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel knows us not*, Isaiah lxiii. 16; and, *Cursed is he that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord*, Jer. xvii. 5. Nor to the law given by Moses: for *the Law worketh* (not ease, but) *wrath*, Rom. iv. 15. Nor will our merits and good works, pilgrimages, fastings or alms-deeds, purchase this ease: for although we could do all we ought to do, yet must we say *we are unprofitable servants, and that we have done but that which was our duty to do*, Luke xvii. 10. It is Christ Jesus, and only Christ Jesus, who can give rest to a troubled soul, that *Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world*, John i. 29. . . .

Those who thus come unto Christ, must also take his yoke upon them. But what is *this yoke*? even the *yoke of obedience*; which should have been ours, but Christ for our sakes took it upon him, and made it his. Yet not that we should draw our necks out of the collar, but still do our endeavours by *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope to come*, Tit. ii. 12. 13. As therefore in *coming unto Christ* you had faith in the ease by him, acquitting or justification; so in the *taking his yoke* ye have sanctification or holiness of life. All which are so linked together, that neither must they nor can they be put asunder. No man comes to Christ by faith, but shall be eased; but no man can

ever truly and seriously come unto him to be eased by him, but he must take his yoke upon him: no man puts on Christ to be justified, but he takes on his *yoke* also to be sanctified. *That which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder*, Matt. xix. 6.

True it is, and nothing more true, that no works of ours in this life can abide the touch-stone of God's law, and therefore not able to justify us in the presence of God, but to condemn us. But it is true also, that we are therefore justified through faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ, that in him we might do works pleasing and acceptable to Almighty God, which out of him we could not do. For as the blood and sufferings of Jesus Christ, imputed to us through faith, cleanseth and acquitteth us of all the sins whereof we stood guilty before we believed; so the imputation of his righteousness when we believe, makes our works (though of themselves far short of what they should be, yet) to be acceptable and just in the eyes of the Almighty; Christ supplying out of his riches our poverty, and by communication of his obedience continually perfecting ours where we fail; that so we might receive the reward of the righteous of him that shall reward every man according to his works. Being therefore in Christ, we are so much the more bound to frame our lives in holy obedience unto God's commandments; in that before we were justified we could not, but now henceforth we are enabled to do that which for Christ's sake will be acceptable and pleasing to Almighty God our Father.

JOS. MEDE.

I shall add but two words of advice on this head, of the difference between justification and sanctification. Do not divide them. Do not confound them.

1st. Do not divide and separate them: no man can do so, but in dream and notion. Justification and sanctification God hath joined together, and no man can put them asunder. They are everlastingly united together, and every one that is a partaker of either is a partaker of both. 2dly, Do not confound them. I am persuaded that one of the main causes of the disorder that is in the spirits and the conversation of the most part of Christians, lies in their confounding these two great blessings. They do not give them their

proper place; they are not rightly exercised about them in their due sphere; therefore I shall offer a word or two of advice for preventing this confounding of them. When you are seeking justification, let there be no mind of sanctification, I mean as to any merit: but when you are seeking sanctification, have a good mind to justification. To make this matter plain to you; when you are seeking justification, you should have no thought of sanctification; the reason is, because justification is an act of pure grace, that we must betake ourselves to God for, as poor condemned sinners. If men will perplex us with qualifications, pray let it run this way, What is it that qualifies a sinner for justification? it is this only, that he must be a condemned sinner; God's law must condemn him, and the man must come into God's court with this sentence in his hand, 'Lord, justify a poor sinner for Christ's sake; the law hath condemned me, and sentenced me to hell, and thither I must go except Gospel grace relieves me in Christ Jesus.' When I say that in seeking justification you should have no mind of sanctification, my meaning is only this, that when you come to plead at God's bar for justification, do not dream of bringing your sanctification with you: for it is altogether improper and impertinent at this court. Let men varnish their doctrines which way they will, and cover them with what pretences they please, they do but murder souls, who pretend to advise them to bring something with them to God for the grace of justification. Bring thy sins with thee, and bring the curse of the law upon thy conscience, and lay these before the Lord, saying, 'Lord, here is an undone sinner, have mercy upon me, for Christ's sake:' there should be nothing else heard there but that. But when you come for sanctification, you have good reason to mind justification, for it flows from it. When you would try your justification, in God's name try it by your sanctification, that is allowed you; the reason is, it is but a trying the tree by its fruit. If the question be, Am I a pardoned, forgiven, accepted sinner in the sight of God, through the righteousness of Christ? if that be the question, try it by your sanctification; for all who are justified by the grace of God in Christ Jesus, are also sanctified by the Spirit of God. Now sanctification being the work

of God in us, is far more easily discernible than justification, which is an act of God about us. Justification is the sentence of a judge, but sanctification, as you have heard, is a gracious work of God on the heart and soul of a poor sinner, and that may be more easily known: therefore try your justification by your sanctification. In short, they who bring sanctification as a title to their justification, they err the breadth of God's whole heavens: and they who pretend to the blessing of justification, and cannot justify it by the practice of sanctification, do but deceive themselves. *If any man, saith the Apostle, abideth in him, he ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked,* 1 John ii. 6. I would only add, it is the Spirit of God alone that can make the word of God, and the truths of it, powerful upon us; it is he alone that can let us into them, and make us know spiritually and savingly the great blessings of justification and sanctification; our acceptance with God through the righteousness of another, and our being adorned by the Spirit of God with a holiness of his own implanting in us. We must not make our holiness our righteousness, nor our righteousness our holiness; our righteousness belongs to another, and only the benefit of it accrues to us; our holiness is the work of the Spirit in us, and Christ is the root of both. He is the person we are justified by or through, and his Spirit is the root of all holiness in us; and both give us the possession of eternal life: justification, by the sentence of the judge, is the ground, and sanctification is that which makes us meet for it in his time and way.

REV. R. TRAILL.

The very simplicity of this Doctrine renders it hard to be received.

It is not without cause that I do so largely intreat of these things. For it seemeth to reason but a small matter, that the Holy Ghost is received by the only hearing of faith, and that there is nothing else required of us, but that we, setting apart all our works, should give ourselves only to the hearing of the Gospel. Man's heart doth not understand nor believe that so great a treasure, namely, the Holy Ghost, is given by the only hearing of faith; but reasoneth after this manner: Forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death, the giving of the Holy Ghost, of righteous-

ness, and everlasting life, are great things: therefore if thou wilt obtain these inestimable benefits, thou must perform some other great and weighty matter. This opinion the devil doth well like and approve, and also increaseth the same in the heart. Therefore when reason heareth this, Thou canst do nothing for the obtaining of the forgiveness of sins, but must only hear the word of God, by and by it crieth out; and saith, Fie! thou makest too small account of the remission of sins, &c. So the inestimable greatness of the gift is the cause that we cannot believe it; and because this incomparable treasure is freely offered, therefore it is despised.

But this we must needs learn, that forgiveness of sins, Christ and the Holy Ghost, are freely given unto us at the only hearing of faith preached, notwithstanding our horrible sins and demerits. And we must not weigh, how great the thing is that is given, and how unworthy we are of it (for so should the greatness of the gift, and our unworthiness, terrify us,) but we must think that it pleaseth God freely to give unto us this unspeakable gift; unto us, I say, which are unworthy, as Christ in Luke saith, *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's pleasure to give it unto you: lo, to give unto you,* saith he, *a kingdom,* Luke xii. 32. To whom? to you unworthy, which are his little flock. If I then be little, and the thing great (nay rather of all things the greatest) which God hath given unto me, I must think, that he also is great and only great, which giveth it. If he offer it and will give it, I consider not mine own sin and unworthiness, but his fatherly good-will towards me which is the giver; and I receive the greatness of the gift with joy and gladness, and am thankful for so inestimable a gift given freely unto me—to me, I say, unworthy, by the hearing of faith.

Here again foolish reason is offended, and reproveth us, saying, Where ye teach men to do nothing at all for the obtaining of so great and inestimable a gift, but to hear the word of God, this seemeth to tend to the great contempt of grace, and to make men secure, idle, and dissolute, so that they slack their hands, and do no good at all. Therefore it is not good to preach this doctrine, for it is not true; but men must be urged to labour and to exercise themselves unto righteousness, and then shall they obtain this gift. The self-same

thing the Pelagians in times past objected against the Christians. But hear what Paul saith in this place, *Ye have received the Holy Ghost*, not by your own labor and travail, not by the works of the law, *but by the hearing of faith*. Briefly, hear what Christ himself saith, and what he answereth to Martha, being very careful, and hardly bearing that her sister Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and hearing his word, should leave her to minister alone. *Martha, Martha*, saith he, *thou carest and art troubled about many things, but one thing is needful: Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her*, Luke x. 41, 42. A man, therefore, is made a Christian not by working but by hearing; wherefore, he that will exercise himself to righteousness must first exercise himself in hearing the Gospel. Now, when he hath heard and received the Gospel, let him give thanks to God with a joyful and a glad heart, and afterwards let him exercise himself in those good works which are commanded in the law, so that the law and works may follow the hearing of faith. So may he quietly walk in the light, which is Christ, and boldly choose and do works, not hypocritical, but good works indeed, such as he knoweth to please God and to be commanded of him, and contemn all those hypocritical shadows of free-will works.

Our adversaries think that faith, whereby we receive the Holy Ghost, is but a light matter; but how high and hard a matter it is, I myself do find by experience, and so do all they which, with me, do earnestly embrace the same. It is soon said, that by the only hearing of faith, the Holy Ghost is received; but it is not so easily heard, laid hold on, believed, and retained, as it is said. Wherefore, if thou hear of me that Christ is that Lamb of God, sacrificed for thy sins, see also that thou hear it effectually. Paul very aptly calleth it the *hearing of faith*, and not the word of faith, although there be small difference; that is, such a word as thou hearing dost believe, so that the word be not only my voice, but may be heard of thee, and may enter into thy heart, and may be believed of thee; then it is truly and indeed the hearing of faith through the which thou receivest the Holy Ghost, which after thou hast once received, thou shalt also mortify thy flesh.

The faithful do find by their own experience, how gladly they would hold and

embrace the word when they hear it, with a full faith, and abandon this opinion of the law and of their own righteousness, but they feel in their flesh a mighty resistance against the spirit; for reason and the flesh will needs work together. This saying, *Ye must be circumcised and keep the law*, cannot be utterly rooted out in our minds, but it sticketh fast in the hearts of all the faithful. There is in the faithful therefore a continual conflict between the hearing of faith and the works of the law. For the conscience always murmureth, and thinketh that this is too easy a way, that by the only hearing of the word, righteousness, the Holy Ghost, and life everlasting, are promised unto us. But come once to an earnest trial thereof, and then tell me how easy a thing it is to hear the word of faith. Indeed, He which giveth is great; moreover, he giveth great things willingly and freely, and upbraideth no man therewith; but thy capacity is hard, and faith weak, still striving against thee, so that thou art not able to receive this gift. But let thy conscience murmur against thee never so much, and let this *must* come never so often into thy mind, yet stand fast and hold out, until thou overcome this *must*. So, as faith increaseth by little and little, that opinion of the righteousness of the law will diminish. But this cannot be done without great conflicts.

LUTHER.

There may be Justification, where there is not the certainty of it.

It seems then that justifying faith consists in these two things; viz. in having a mind to know Christ, and a will to rest upon him.

Yes; whosoever sees so much excellency in Christ that thereby he is drawn to embrace him as the holy rock of salvation, that man truly believes to justification.

But is it not necessary to justification to be assured that my sins are pardoned, and that I am justified?

No, that is no act of faith as it justifieth, but an effect and fruit that followeth after justification: for no man is justified by believing that he is justified, for he must be justified before he can believe it: and no man is pardoned by believing that he is pardoned, for he must be pardoned before he can believe it. But faith as it justifieth is a resting upon Christ to obtain pardon, the acknowledging him to be

the only Saviour, and the hanging upon him for salvation, Matt. xvi. 16. John xx. 31. Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9. 1 John iv. 15, and v. 5.

It is the direct act of faith that justifieth, that whereby I do believe; it is the reflect act of faith that assures, that whereby I know I do believe, and it comes by way of argumentation thus:

Maj. Whosoever relieth upon Christ the Saviour of the world for justification and pardon, the word of God saith, that he by so doing is actually justified and pardoned.

Min. But I do truly rely upon Christ for justification and pardon.

Concl. Therefore I undoubtedly believe that I am justified and pardoned.

But many times both the former propositions may be granted to be true, and yet a weak Christian want strength to draw the conclusion; for it is one thing to believe, and another thing to believe that I do believe: it is one thing for a man to have his salvation certain, another thing to be certain that it is certain.

How then doth the soul reach after Christ in the act of justifying?

Even as a man fallen into a river and like to be drowned, as he is carried down with the flood espies the bough of a tree hanging over the river, which he catcheth at and clings unto with all his might to save him, and seeing no other way of succour but that, ventures his life upon it: this man so soon as he has fastened upon this bough is in a safe condition, though all troubles, fears and terrors are not presently out of his mind, until he comes to himself, and sees himself quite out of danger, then he is sure he is safe, but he was safe before he was sure. Even so it is with a believer; faith is but the espying of Christ as the only means to save, and the reaching out of the heart to lay hold upon him. God hath spoke the word and made the promise in his Son; I believe him to be the only Saviour, and remit my soul to him to be saved by his mediation. So soon as the soul can do this, God imputeth the righteousness of his Son unto it, and it is actually justified in the court of heaven, though it is not presently quieted and pacified in the court of conscience: that is done afterwards, in some sooner, in some later, by the fruits and effects of justification.

ABP. USHER.

Faith not our Righteousness, but makes Righteousness ours.

You shall understand, that in our justification by Christ it is not all one thing, the office of God unto man, and the office of man unto God. Justification is not the office of man, but of God; for man cannot make himself righteous by his own works, neither in part nor in the whole: for that were the greatest arrogancy and presumption of man that Antichrist could set up against God, to affirm that a man might by his own works take away and purge his own sins, and so justify himself. But justification is the office of God only; and is not a thing which we render unto him; but which we receive of him: not which we give to him; but which we take of him by his free mercy, and by the only merits of his most dearly beloved Son, our only Redeemer, Saviour, and Justifier, Jesus Christ.

So that the true understanding of this doctrine—We be justified freely by faith without works, or that we be justified by faith in Christ only—is not, that this our own act to believe in Christ, or this our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us, and deserve our justification unto us; for that were to count ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within ourselves; but the true understanding and meaning thereof is, that although we hear God's word, and believe it; although we have faith, hope, charity, repentance, dread, and fear of God within us; and do never so many good works thereunto: yet we must renounce the merit of all our said virtues, of faith, hope, and charity, and all our other virtues and good deeds, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak and insufficient, and imperfect, to deserve remission of our sins, and our justification: and therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and that sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Christ Jesus, the Son of God, once offered for us upon the cross, to obtain thereby God's grace and remission, as well of our original sin in baptism, as of all actual sin committed by us after our baptism; if we truly repent, and turn unfeignedly to him again.

So that, as St. John Baptist, although he were never so virtuous and godly a man, yet in this matter of forgiving of

sin, he did put the people from him, and appointed them unto Christ, saying thus unto them, *Behold, yonder is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*, John i. 29: even so, as great and as godly a virtue as the lively faith is, yet it putteth us from itself; and remitteth or appointeth us unto Christ, for to have only by him remission of our sins, or justification. So that our faith in Christ, as it were, saith unto us thus; It is not I that take away your sins, but it is Christ only; and to him only I send you for that purpose, forsaking therein all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works, and only putting your trust in Christ.

HOMILY ON SALVATION.

St. Paul's citation of Abraham's faith Vindicated.

BUT some here will object, (as the Jews do, and certain cavilling spirits at this day,) saying, that this word *faith* in the Hebrew signified truth, and therefore we do not rightly apply it; and moreover, that this place, out of Gen. xv. 5, speaketh of a corporal thing, namely, of the promise of posterity, and therefore is not well applied of Paul to faith in Christ, but ought simply to be understood of the faith of Abraham, whereby *he believed according to the promise of God, that he should have seed*: and hereby they would prove that the arguments and allegations of Paul do conclude nothing. In like manner they may cavil also, that the place which Paul a little after allegeth out of Heb. ii. 4, speaketh of faith as touching the full accomplishing of the whole vision, and not of faith only in Christ, for the which Paul allegeth it. Likewise they may wrest all the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, which speaketh of faith and the examples of faith. By these things such vainglorious and arrogant spirits do hunt for praise, and seek to be counted wise and learned, where they least of all deserve it. But because of the simple and ignorant, we will briefly answer to their cavillations.

To the first I answer thus, that faith is nothing else, but the truth of the heart; that is to say, a true and a right opinion of the heart as touching God. Now, faith only thinketh and judgeth rightly of God, and not reason. And then doth a man think rightly of God, when he believeth his word. But when he will measure God without the word, and believe him accord-

ing to the wisdom of reason, he hath no right opinion of God in his heart, and therefore he cannot think or judge of him as he should do. As for example, when a monk imagineth that his cowl, his shaven crown, and his vows, do please God, and that grace and everlasting life is given unto him for the same, he hath no true opinion of God, but false, and full of impiety. Truth therefore is faith itself, which judgeth rightly of God, namely, that God regardeth not our works and righteousness, because we are *unclean*; but that he will have mercy upon us, look upon us, accept us, justify us, and save us, if we *believe in his Son, whom he hath sent to be a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. This is a true opinion of God, and in very deed nothing else but faith itself. I cannot comprehend, nor be fully assured by reason, that I am received into God's favor for Christ's sake; but I hear this to be pronounced by the Gospel, and *I lay hold upon it by faith*.

To the second cavillation I answer, that Paul doth rightly allege the place out of the fifteenth of Genesis, applying it to faith in Christ. For with faith always must be joined a certain assurance of God's mercy. Now this assurance comprehendeth a faithful trust of remission of sins for Christ's sake. For it was impossible that thy conscience should look for any thing at God's hand, except first it be assured that God is merciful unto thee for Christ's sake. Therefore all the promises are to be referred to that first promise concerning Christ, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*, Gen. iii. 15. So did all the prophets both understand it and teach it. By this we may see that the faith of our fathers in the Old Testament, and ours now in the New, is all one, although they differ as touching their outward objects. Which thing Peter witnesseth in the Acts, when he saith, *which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear: but we believe through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be saved, even as they did*, Acts xv. 10, 11. And Paul saith, *Our fathers did all drink of that spiritual Rock that followed them, which Rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4. And Christ himself saith, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad*, John viii. 56. Notwithstanding, the faith of the fathers was grounded on Christ which was to come, as ours is on Christ which is now

come. Abraham in his time was justified by faith in Christ to come; but if he lived at this day, he would be justified by faith in Christ now revealed and present; like as I have said before of Cornelius, who at the first believed in Christ to come, but being instructed by Peter, he believed that Christ was already come, Acts x. 1. 3. Therefore the diversity of times never changeth faith, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the gifts thereof. For there hath been, is, and ever shall be, one mind, one judgment and understanding concerning Christ, as well in the ancient fathers, as in the faithful which are at this day, and shall come hereafter. So we have as well Christ to come, and believe in him, as the fathers in the Old Testament had. For we look for him to 'come again in the last day with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead,' whom now we believe to be come already for our salvation. Therefore this allegation of Paul offendeth none but those blind and ignorant cavillers.

Paul therefore, as I have said, rightly allegeth that place out of Genesis, of faith in Christ, when he speaketh of the faith of Abraham. For all the promises past were contained in Christ to come. Therefore, as well Abraham and the other fathers, as also we, are made righteous by faith in Christ; they by faith in him then to come, we by faith in him now present. For we intreat now of the nature and manner of justification, which is all one both in them and in us, whether it be in Christ to be revealed, or in Christ now revealed and present. It is enough, therefore, that Paul showeth that the law justifieth not, but only faith, whether it be in Christ to come, or in Christ already come. LUTHER.

The Comfort of this Doctrine.

HOWSOEVER men when they sit at ease, do vainly tickle their hearts with the vain conceit of I know not what proportionable correspondence, between their merits and their rewards, which in the trance of their high speculations they dream that God hath measured, weigh'd, and laid up, as it were in bundles for them: notwithstanding we see by daily experience, in a number even of them, that when the hour of death approacheth, when they secretly hear themselves summoned forthwith to appear, and stand at the bar of that Judge, whose brightness causeth the eyes of the angels themselves to dazzle, all these idle

imaginations do then begin to hide their faces; to name merits then, is to lay their souls upon the rack, the memory of their own deeds is loathsome unto them, they forsake all things, wherein they have put any trust or confidence; no staff to lean upon, no ease, no rest, no comfort then, but only in Jesus Christ. HOOKER.

You may possibly now talk of your good works, and performing the condition of the covenant by those works, and being justified by them; but when you shall come, and appear at the dreadful tribunal of a most just God—when your conscience shall be awake, and set all your sins before you in their full number and magnitude, you will be, I doubt not, of another opinion, and say with David, who might have pleaded good works as much as you, *Ne intres, Domine, in judicium cum servo tuo*. I say, when you shall come before that great and just Judge, you will reject your own works, and inherent righteousness, and rely upon the sufferings and satisfaction of our blessed Saviour, and the justice purchased for us by it; and say, as a late learned and pious prelate did, in his last will and testament, 'I commend my soul to God, beseeching him not to look upon it as it is in itself, infinitely polluted with sin,' no mention of good works, or performance of the condition of the covenant by them; though, had there been any such thing, he might justly have pleaded and depended upon it, 'but as it is redeemed and purged with the precious blood of Christ: in confidence of whose merits alone,' not of his performance of the condition of the covenant by his own works, 'it is, that I cast myself upon his mercy for the pardon of my sins.'* So that pious and very learned and judicious person.

BP. BARLOW.

This method of becoming righteous through the obedience of Christ, is worthy of all acceptation, because it administers the *richest consolation to man*: it is an inexhaustible spring of satisfaction and repose.

Luther, that renowned reformer, and great champion for the Protestant cause, when he broke away from the mists of

* D. Sanderson, late Bishop of Lincoln. See his *Life*, by Isaac Walton, London, 1678, pp. 179, 180.

Popery, and began to understand this most noble peculiarity of Christianity, declared, that 'the gate of Paradise seemed to fly open to his view:—that he had a glimpse of its beauty, in contemplating this sacred truth; and a taste of its delights, in believing it; so sweet a composure, and such a charming tranquillity did it diffuse through his mind.' Nor do I wonder at his saying, 'For, while we are ignorant of this doctrine, there is nothing but horror and dread around us.' If we strike this text from our Bible, or this article from our creed, all is dismal and distressing. Turn which way you will, the prospect is uncomfortable. If we look to *ourselves*, we shall find misery and guilt; if to God, nothing but indignation and displeasure.—But this brightens up the whole scene. Let us observe, in the character of a feeble Christian, and of an awakened profligate, what glad tidings the Gospel is, by virtue of this doctrine; and what a miserable comforter it would be without it. The language of the *former*, in his private meditations, must proceed in some such manner as this: 'Wherewithal shall I come before the most high God? Shall I offer him my pious services? Alas! they are miserably deficient; they issue from a corrupt stock, and cannot but be corrupt shoots: I have done nothing that is worthy of his acceptance: how then shall I stand in his sacred presence? I strive to be perfect and entire, and wanting nothing; but I feel myself to be poor and indigent, and wretchedly defective. O! whither shall I go, but to him who is appointed for this very purpose? that the bones, which are broken by misery and guilt, may rejoice; that the hands which hang down, through self-condemnation and despondency, may be lifted up.—Thither then will I turn, frail and dispirited as I am, and cast all my burden upon the Lord Jesus Christ; in his unspotted righteousness, and in nothing else, can the sole of my foot find any rest. When doubts arise, and fear, like a gloomy cloud, thickens around me, this *Sun* of righteousness shall dissipate the gloom in all my pilgrimage; this shall be my constant song; in all my anxieties, this shall be my only cordial:—*Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me! O put thy trust in Jesus Christ!* His merits, and not thine own works, are the horn of thy

salvation: *whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded.*—And as for the poor sinner brought to a sense of his enormous crimes; methinks I hear him bewailing his condition, in some such disconsolate manner: 'O wretched man that I am! how shall I attain the favor of God? My sins are multiplied above number, and aggravated beyond expression. I cannot make any satisfaction for what is past, much less can I win the Divine good-will for the future. I am polluted, root and branch: what can I do?'—Truly, sinner, I know not what thou canst do, unless thou comest to Jesus Christ; there is not a gleam of hope, or a grain of comfort, in all the universe besides. If thou lamentest thy folly, and seest thy undone state, *with the Lord there is mercy*, abundant mercy, and with the Lord Jesus Christ there is *plenteous redemption*. If thou canst rely on *Christ*, thy iniquities shall be done away like a morning cloud; if thou canst believe in *HIM*, thy debts are cancelled through his blood; and that which thou art unable to perform, he hath fulfilled for thee. See, how consonant this doctrine is to the whole series of Scripture, and the voice of ancient prophecies! See, what an unshared revenue of glory and thanksgiving it brings unto the blessed God:—both supporting the *feeble Christian* amidst all his infirmities, and opening a door of hope to the *awakened sinner*, notwithstanding all his impieties! Surely, then, this precious doctrine is worthy of all acceptance: surely we have reason to receive it with all imaginable thankfulness.

REV. J. HERVEY.

The Doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church stated, and compared with this Doctrine.

THERE is a glorifying righteousness of men in the world to come, as there is a justifying and sanctifying righteousness here. The righteousness, wherewith we shall be clothed in the world to come, is both perfect and inherent. That whereby here we are justified is perfect; but not inherent. That whereby we are sanctified, is inherent, but not perfect. This openeth a way to the understanding of that grand question, which hangeth yet in controversy between us and the church of Rome, about the matter of justifying righteousness.

First, although they imagine, that the mother of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ were, for his honor, and by his special protection, preserved clean from all sin: yet touching the rest, they teach as we do, that infants that never did actually offend, have their natures defiled, destitute of justice, averted from God; that in making man righteous, none do efficiently work with God, but God. They teach as we do, that unto justice no man ever attained, but by the merits of Jesus Christ. They teach as we do, that, although Christ as God, be the efficient; as man, the meritorious cause of our justice: yet in us also there is something required. God is the cause of our natural life; in him we live: but he quickeneth not the body without the soul in the body. Christ hath merited to make us just; but, as a medicine, which is made for health, doth not heal by being made, but by being applied; so, by the merits of Christ there can be no justification without the application of his merit. Thus far we join hands with the church of Rome.

Wherein then do we disagree? We disagree about the nature and essence of the medicine, whereby Christ cureth our disease; about the manner of applying it; about the number, and the power of means, which God requireth in us for the effectual applying thereof to our souls' comfort. When they are required to show what the righteousness is, whereby a Christian man is justified: they answer, that it is a divine spiritual quality; which quality received into the soul, doth first make it to be one of them, who are *born of God*; and, secondly, indue it with power, to bring forth such works as they do that are born of him; even as the soul of man being joined to his body, doth first make him to be of the number of reasonable creatures; and, secondly, enable him to perform the natural functions which are proper to his kind;—that it maketh the soul amiable and gracious in the sight of God, in regard whereof it is termed grace; that it purgeth, purifieth, and washeth out all the stains and pollutions of sins; that by it, through the merit of Christ, we are delivered as from sin, so from eternal death and condemnation, the reward of sin. This grace they will have to be applied by infusion; to the end, that as the body is warm by the heat which is in the body, so the soul might be righteous by

inherent grace: which grace they make capable of increase; as the body may be more and more warm, so the soul more and more justified, according as grace should be augmented; the augmentation whereof is merited by good works, as good works are made meritorious by it. Wherefore, the first receipt of grace in their divinity, is, the first justification; the increase thereof the second justification. As grace may be increased by the merit of good works; so it may be diminished by the demerit of sins venial, it may be lost by mortal sin. Inasmuch, therefore, as it is needful in the one case to repair, in the other to recover the loss which is made: the infusion of grace hath her sundry after-meals; for the which cause they make many ways to apply the infusion of grace. It is applied to infants through baptism, without either faith or works, and in them really it taketh away original sin, and the punishment due unto it; it is applied to infidels and wicked men in the first justification, through baptism without works, yet not without faith; and it taketh away both sins actual and original together, with all whatsoever punishment, eternal or temporal, thereby deserved. Unto such as have attained the first justification, that is to say, the first receipt of grace, it is applied farther by good works to the increase of former grace, which is the second justification. If they work more and more, grace doth more increase, and they are more and more justified. To such as diminished it by venial sins, it is applied by holy water, Ave Marys, crossings, papal salutations, and such like, which serve for reparations of grace decayed. To such as have lost it through mortal sin, it is applied by the sacrament (as they term it) of penance: which sacrament hath force to confer grace anew; yet in such sort, that being so conferred, it hath not altogether so much power as at the first. For it only cleanseth out the stain or guilt of sin committed, and changeth the punishment eternal into a temporal satisfactory punishment here, if time do serve; if not, hereafter to be endured, except it be lightened by masses, works of charity, pilgrimages, fasts, and such like; or else shortened by pardon for term, or by plenary pardon quite removed, and taken away. This is *the mystery of the man of sin*. This maze the church of Rome doth cause her followers to tread, when they ask her the way to

justification. I cannot stand now to unrip this building, and sift it piece by piece; only I will pass it by in few words, that that may befall Babylon in the presence of that which God hath builded, as happened unto *Dagon before the Ark!*

Doubtless, saith the Apostle, I have counted all things loss, and judge them to be dung, that I may win Christ; and to be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith, Phil. iii. 8, 9. Whether they speak of the first or second justification, they make it the essence of a divine quality inherent; they make it righteousness which is in us. If it be in us, then is it ours, as our souls are ours though we have them from God, and can hold them no longer than pleaseth him; for if he withdraw the breath of our nostrils, we fall to dust: but the righteousness wherein we must be found, if we will be justified, is not our own; therefore we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness for as many as are found in him. In him God findeth us, if we be faithful, for by faith we are incorporated into Christ. Then, although in ourselves we be altogether sinful and unrighteous, yet even the man which is impious in himself, full of iniquity, full of sin; him being found in Christ through faith, and having his sin remitted through *repentance*; him God upholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin, by not imputing it, taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto by pardoning it, and accepteth him in Jesus Christ, as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that was commanded him in the law: shall I say more perfectly righteous than if himself had fulfilled the whole law? I must take heed what I say: but the Apostle saith, *God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21.* Such we are in the sight of God the Father, as is the very Son of God himself. Let it be counted folly or frenzy, or fury, whatsoever; it is our comfort, and our wisdom; we care for no knowledge in the world but this—that man hath sinned, and God hath suffered; that God hath made himself the Son of man, and that men are made the righteousness of God. You see therefore that the church of Rome, in teaching justification by inherent

grace, doth pervert the truth of Christ, and that by the hands of the Apostles we have received otherwise than she teacheth. Now concerning the righteousness of sanctification, we deny it not to be inherent: we grant, that unless we work, we have it not: only we distinguish it as a thing different in nature from the righteousness of justification: we are righteous the one way, by the faith of Abraham; the other way, except we do the works of Abraham, we are not righteous. Of the one, St. Paul, *To him that worketh not, but believeth, faith is counted for righteousness, Rom. iv. 5.* Of the other, St. John, *Qui facit justitiam, justus est*; 'He is righteous which worketh righteousness.' Of the one, St. Paul doth prove by Abraham's example, that we have it of faith without works. Of the other, St. James by Abraham's example, that by works we have it, and not only by faith. St. Paul doth plainly sever these two parts of Christian righteousness one from the other. For in the sixth to the Romans thus he writeth, *Being freed from sin, and made servants to God, ye have your fruit in holiness, and the end everlasting life. Ye are made free from sin, and made servants unto God; Rom. vi.* This is the righteousness of *justification*: *ye have your fruit in holiness*: this is the righteousness of *sanctification*. By the one, we are interested in the right of inheriting; by the other, we are brought to the actual possession of eternal bliss, and so the end of both is *everlasting life*. . . .

Our doctrine is no other than that we have learned at the feet of Christ; namely, that God doth justify the believing man, yet not for the worthiness of his belief, but for the worthiness of him which is believed; God rewardeth abundantly every one which worketh, yet not for any meritorious dignity which is, or can be in the work, but through his mere mercy, by whose commandment he worketh. Contrariwise, their doctrine is—that as pure water of itself hath no savour, but if it pass through a sweet pipe, it taketh a pleasant smell of the pipe through which it passeth; so, although before grace received, our works do neither satisfy nor merit; yet after, they do both the one and the other. Every virtuous action hath then power in such to satisfy; that if we ourselves commit mortal sin, no heinous crime, whereunto spend this treasure of satisfaction if

own behalf, it turneth to the benefit of other men's release, on whom it should please the steward of the house of God to bestow it; so that we may satisfy for ourselves and others; but merit only for ourselves. In meriting, our actions do work with two hands; with one they get their morning stipend, the *increase of grace*; with the other their evening hire, the *everlasting crown of glory*. Indeed, they teach, that our good works do not these things as they come from us, but as they come from grace in us, which grace in us is another thing in their divinity, than is the mere goodness of God's mercy towards us in Christ Jesus.

If it were not a long deluded spirit which hath possession of their hearts; were it possible but that they should see how plainly they do herein gainsay the very ground of apostolic faith? Is this that salvation by grace, whereof so plentiful mention is made in the Scriptures of God? Was this their meaning, which first taught the world to look for salvation only by Christ? *By grace*, the Apostle saith, and by grace in such sort as a gift: a thing that cometh *not of ourselves, nor of our works, lest any man should boast*, and say, 'I have wrought out my own salvation.' By grace they confess; but by grace in such sort, that as many as wear the diadem of bliss, they wear nothing but what they have won. The Apostle, as if he had foreseen how the church of Rome would abuse the world in time by ambiguous terms, to declare in what sense the name of grace must be taken, when we make it the cause of our salvation, saith, *He saved us according to his mercy*: which mercy, although it exclude not the washing of our new birth, the renewing of our hearts by the Holy Ghost, the means, the virtues, the duties which God requireth of our hands which shall be saved; yet it is so repugnant unto merits, that to say, we are saved for the worthiness of any thing which is ours, is to deny we are saved by grace. Grace bestoweth freely; and therefore justly requireth the glory of that which is bestowed. We deny the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; we abuse, disannul, and annihilate the benefit of his bitter passion, if we rest in these proud imaginations, that life is deservedly ours, by at we merit it, and that we are worthy

HOOKE.

Some remarkable Confessions of celebrated Roman Catholic divines relative to this Doctrine.

BUT, in fine, whatsoever determination was made at the council of Trent upon this matter, I desire the reader to consider that there always have been a great many Christians within the communion of the church of Rome, who have only apparently followed the decrees of that council; and who, after all, have followed the doctrines of the Gospel and of antiquity. I say moreover, that they have strongly opposed them, and that it was out of pure necessity that they revoked them at the hour of death. So true is it, that conscience cannot always be seduced by the errors of the understanding; it is true also, that when men are approaching before the throne of God's justice, it is difficult for them to preserve that spirit of pride which is in the Roman school. One can hardly produce a more lively proof of the truth of this reflection, than the instance of Cardinal Hosius, who presided at the council of Trent under Pius IV. These are some of the expressions of his last will: 'I approach the throne of thy grace, O Father of mercies and of all consolation, to the end that I may obtain mercy, and find grace in thy sight. Whensoever it shall please thee to demand back again that which thou hast committed to me, into thy hands I resign my spirit; which if thou shouldst look upon as it is in itself, I confess it is not worthy to appear in the presence of thy Majesty, for it is full of all kind of pollutions; but if thou hast respect to the blood of thy Son, wherein it has been washed and purified, and to those bitter torments which he suffered for our sins, that he might render us acceptable in thy sight; they are worthy that for their sake thou shouldst give it eternal life, which he purchased at so great a price.' He desires that God would not look upon him in himself, but in the face of Jesus Christ. 'I am not worthy,' says he, 'that thou shouldst behold me with the eyes of thy Majesty: but as it is most worthy, that for the sake of his death and passion, thou shouldst not only look upon me, but crown me also; it is therefore that I come unto thee, most dear Father, and that without any merits, but those inestimable ones of thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord and my Redeemer. I bring thee the

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merit of that death wherein alone I place all my hope and my confidence; that is my righteousness, my satisfaction, my redemption, and my propitiation. The death of my Lord is my merit.' And after that, having recited the words of St. Bernard in his 61st Sermon upon the Canticles, which I have cited before, he adds, speaking of the blood of Jesus Christ, 'Regard that price, for that price sake declare me worthy to be placed among the sheep at thy right hand.' See here what the conscience says, when it beholds its sins, and its good works; and it will never speak otherwise, especially at the hour of death, where it scatters away its illusions; except the church of Rome does blot out of her books the questions which are made to dying persons, because they contain a clear and express abjuration of the doctrine of merits of condignity. And though the indexes made by the order of the Council of Trent have attempted to raze them out, yet they have hitherto never been able to do it in the Roman communion. And if the priests, who ought to make use of them about dying persons, do suppress them, to accommodate themselves to the designs of the Council, and of the *Index Expurgatorius*, such, at least, as do not acknowledge the tribunal of the Inquisition, do retain this truth, as that which does afford all the consolation to dying persons that they can have. . . .

The doctrine of the merit of good works is justly looked upon by Protestants as one of the opinions of the present church of Rome.

First, The Council of Trent* does anatomise those who deny that a man justified by good works does truly merit eternal life. Véga, who wrote his books of justification during the time that he was at the council, does maintain,† that the Council, by 'truly meriting,' did understand 'meriting *de condigno*.' Now the difference betwixt merit *de congruo*, and merit *de condigno*, used in the Roman church, is this:—Merit *de congruo* signifies a good work, which is worthy of divine reward, not out of any obligation from justice, but out of a principle of fitness, (or congruity,) and from the free bounty of God;—merit *ex condigno* is a good work, to which reward is due from a principle of justice, as well because of the worth, or dignity of the work, as because of the worth of the person that has done it.

* Sess. 6. Can. 32.

† Op. de Justific. q. 5.

Secondly, It is the opinion of the divines of the church of Rome, as Bellarmine has determined;‡ Gregory de Valentia maintains it also for a certain § point of faith.

Thirdly, The Inquisition did most evidently declare it, when it did expunge for heretical, out of several books of that church, such propositions as did deny the merit of good works. The same thing also was done by Cardinal Quiroga, in his *Index Expurgatorius*, which he composed according to the order of the Council of Trent.

Fourthly, The same spirit did appear in the divines of the church of Rome, when they advised those of their communion to take heed of the opinion of such ancient authors as do oppose the merit of good works. Which was done at Rome, in Spain, in France, with respect to such authors as they could not any longer suppress. Which matter of fact is so evident, that nothing but the height of impudence can be able to gainsay or deny it.

If it comes once to be fully acknowledged that the church of Rome is of this opinion, we may justly charge it with one of the proudest errors that it could ever possibly be guilty of; and with having renounced that grand principle of Christianity, which does look upon that reward which God does vouchsafe to good works, as the effect not of commutative justice, which gives so much for so much, but as the effect of the faithfulness of God to such as should obey his commandments, though their obedience has nothing in itself able to merit such a reward. For so saith St. Paul, *The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 18.

Moreover, we are very sure, that if the church of Rome, in this article of her belief, be quite of another opinion than St. Paul, and the whole stream of antiquity was of, for the eleven first ages of the church, which has sufficiently been proved; so neither does it agree with the most eminent doctors of the Latin church, which have been since the eleventh age. To prove this, is the design of this discourse, that there may be no refuge left for this error in this matter.

I begin with that exhortation which Anselme, archbishop of Canterbury,|| required

‡ De Justif. l. 5. c. 17.

§ Tom. 2. Disp. 8. q. 6. punct. i. Sect. i.

|| Oper. p. 291.

should be given to a certain monk when he was dying, after this manner: Do you believe that you cannot be saved, but by the death of Jesus Christ? *Ans.* I do believe so. Do you heartily thank him for it? *Ans.* I do. Be you therefore ever thanking him for it as long as you live, and put your whole trust and confidence in that death alone; and let that be your only safeguard. And if the Lord will enter into judgment with thee, say thus: O Lord, unless I hold the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thee, and thy judgment, I am not able to plead with thee. If he tells you, that you have merited damnation, say unto him, I hold the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my ill deserts: and instead of those merits which I ought to have, but alas! have not, I offer to thee the merit of his most meritorious passion. Let him say moreover, I hold the death of Jesus Christ between me and thine anger; after which, let him add, Into thy hands, &c., and he shall die with assurance, and he shall never see death.

After this manner did Anselme, who died in the year 1109, require that a monk, that is, such a one as, according to their opinion, has merits enough, both for himself and others, should make his confession upon his death-bed. Concerning which action of his, one may observe, first, That this Anselme was canonized, and his name is to be found, upon the 21st of April, in the Roman Martyrology, which shows that he was no teacher of heresy, (as they call heresy.) Secondly, That this exhortation which he required should be given to persons that were dying, was looked upon as so excellent a one all Europe over, that there is scarce any book, belonging to the church affairs, wherein it is not to be found. Thirdly, That the church of Rome itself did own it, as Cardinal Hosius does witness.* Fourthly, That it was never charged with containing any pernicious doctrine till the popes, and the inquisitors of the faith, and the Council of Trent, caused those articles, which we just now took notice of, to be blotted out, as contrary to the belief of their church. Fifthly, That notwithstanding this condemnation of it by the *Index Expurgatorius*, it is still retained in France, and may be seen in that edition of the book entitled *Ordo Baptizandi*, which was published in the year 1614, where the same questions and an-

swers are now to be seen, which were formerly condemned by Cardinal Quiroga.

One had need to transcribe the greatest part of St. Bernard's works, to produce all those places, wherein that Father has shown himself to be of the same opinion with St. Anselme. Thus he speaks in his sixty-first sermon upon the Canticles: 'In the mercy of the Lord is my merit; I am rich in merits, seeing he is rich in compassion. As the mercies of the Lord are numberless, so are my merits. If my conscience does accuse me of a great many sins, where sins do abound, there does grace much more abound. . . shall I sing of my own righteousnesses? O Lord, I will make mention of thy righteousness only, which is mine also, because thou hast made it so.'

He speaks still more particularly, at the end of his book, of Grace, and of Free-will. 'How,' says he, 'does the Apostle call that crown, which he says is laid up for him, *a crown of righteousness*? Is it not because one may justly claim, as a due debt, whatsoever is never so freely promised? He says, in effect, *I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him*. And because he believed him, who had promised him, he does with confidence demand that which had been promised. The promise is of mercy, but it ought to be performed in justice. The crown then which St. Paul does wait for, is *a crown of righteousness*, not of his own righteousness, but of God's. For it is but just, that he should pay what he owes, and he owes whatsoever he has promised. So then, it is the justice of God only, on which the Apostle does rely. . . If any one, therefore, would give our merits their due name, they are certain seeds of hope, motives to charity, marks of a secret predestination, presages of future happiness, the way to a kingdom, but by no means the cause which does entitle us to it.'

It is impossible to blast this proud doctrine of merits of condignity, more effectually than St. Bernard does in these words. The same sense is repeated in some others of his works; as in his first Sermon of the Annunciation, and in the fifteenth Sermon on *Quis habitat*, and especially in his hundred-and-ninetieth Epistle against the heresies of Petrus Abelardus, who was one of the first, after the Pelagians, who did oppose this doctrine of the Gospel.

* *Confess. Fidei Petric. cap. 73.*

We may observe in the mean time, First, That St. Bernard was canonized by Alexander III. in the year 1165, viz. twelve years after his death: Secondly, That Pope Innocent II. does approve of this Epistle of St. Bernard's against Abelardus, as may be seen by that epistle which he wrote to the archbishops of Sens and of Rheims, to their suffragans, and to St. Bernard himself, and which is the 194th amongst St. Bernard's Epistles: Thirdly, That he was the most learned man in his time: Fourthly, That he was the founder of an eminent order, which is dispersed throughout all the western part of the world; and that a great number of abbots, bishops and cardinals have come out of his school.

Petrus, abbot of St. Rhemy — at Rheims, and afterwards bishop of Chartres, wrote these words a little before the year 1170.* 'That the conscience of him who does make confession of his greatest sins, does stand in need of a handful of the blood of Jesus Christ. Instead of dipping the tip of his finger in water, let him wash his hands, not in the blood of a sinner, but in the death of his Redeemer. Let him dip his finger in the place where the nails were.' He does afterward compare the blood of Jesus Christ upon the cross, to that of the lamb which was sprinkled by the priest; and from thence takes occasion to express himself thus: 'Dip then thy finger, and sprinkle it against the veil of the sanctuary, to the end that the blood of our Lord's passion may serve thee for a key to open the gates of heaven.'

The same author says also in another work of his,† 'We must every day present before God, not our own merit, which is evil, but the privilege of his nature, and his mercy.' This is the constant doctrine of the twelfth age.

Urban IV. lived about the middle of the thirteenth age. He is famous for instituting the Feast of the Sacrament, upon the account of a pretended revelation to a certain religious woman of the country of Liege. There is a commentary of his upon the *Miserere*, where he shows, that he does follow the same doctrine concerning the merit of good works, which was universally received before his time. First, He protests that he does appeal from justice to mercy, according to the exhortation of St. Anselme. Secondly, He does con-

fess that there is nothing in him able to merit that glory which he does wait for. Thirdly, He declares that mercy has no respect to our merits, but only to our misery. Fourthly, He does make use of such terms as these: I do not beg for my own merits' sake, or for thy justice or my own. . . or for my works' sake, wherein I have miserably gone astray, but for thy great mercy. 'Non peto secundum meritum meum, vel secundum justitiam tuam vel meam. . . vel secundum opera mea, quibus miser deviavi, sed secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.'

Thomas Aquinas, who was contemporary with this pope, speaks thus:‡ 'No man can make any pretence of merit before God, unless by supposing a divine disposition, by virtue of which, man does obtain of God by his operation, *quasi mercedem*, in manner of a salary as it were, that for which God has given him the power of working.' This is the doctrine of the Gospel. But see here the leaven which Thomas adds to it, and which has so very much soured the whole mass of the divinity of the church of Rome. The same Thomas, in the third article of the same question, with some other divines in his time, does maintain, That because of the operation and the grace of the Holy Spirit wrought in the faithful, and from whence good works do proceed, their good works do merit *de condigno*; which is so very weak a foundation, that one might naturally draw from it a doctrine quite contrary to that which Thomas Aquinas has gathered from it. Upon which account alone, Vasquez thought himself obliged to refute it. The same leaven is to be found also in St. Bonaventure, in Gulielmus Antissiodorensis, and in Gulielmus Parisiensis. But all this could not hinder, but that the holy doctrine should still be preserved in the chairs and schools of the Latin church.

Ægidius de Roma is very famous both for his birth and dignities, but especially for having undertaken the defence of St. Thomas. The sum of which has been critically examined by an eminent divine of Oxford, in a book entitled, *Thomæ Reprehensorium*.§ In the mean time he has made no difficulty of deserting St. Thomas in the matter of merit. He does expressly say,|| First, That there must be some equality between the merit and its reward; and that it is this equality, which is the foun-

* Tract. de Panibus, cap. 15.

† Lib. i. de Tabern. Mosaici Exposit. p. 920. B.P.

‡ 1, 2. Q. 114. A. 1. § Auc. Mirm. c. 409.

|| In 2. dist. 27. Q. i. Art. 3.

dation of justice; then he concludes, that where there is not such an equality, there can be no justice. Secondly, He maintains that the faithful are considered in respect of God, as servants are in respect of their masters, children of their parents, and the wife of her husband. He could not have spoken more expressly of justice or of merit. Thirdly, He shows how that our Saviour Jesus Christ declared this truth, where he says, *When ye shall have done all those things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do*, Luke xvii. 10. For a servant cannot do more than he ought; for whatsoever he does, is but his duty. There is not therefore any thing simply just, nor simply a merit between a master and a servant, but there may be something like it. This is the opinion of him whom they commonly call the prince of divines.

Raymondus de Rochefort, penitentiary of Gregory IX. and the third general of the order of the Jacobins, composed at the same time a summary of the cases of repentance, an abridgment of which may be found in that place, where the author does set down the confession of dying persons, in the same terms that St. Anselme had prescribed to them. There is no need of repeating them: I suppose it was made a little after Raymondus's work was published, because there are so many ancient manuscripts of it to be found in libraries.

Durandus, bishop of Puy, and afterwards bishop of Meaux, does solemnly confute the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, about the merit of good works.* And he does it so notably, both by Scripture and reason, that the divines of the church of Rome are forced to look upon him as an antagonist of their Thomas Aquinas. Yet for all that, this Durandus taught divinity at Rome, and at Paris they had generally a great reverence and esteem for him.

Moreover it is plain, that this was not his opinion in particular, but was the general belief of most people: First, that very year in which Durandus died, viz. in the year 1333, Gulielmus de Montrotier published a treatise of his, for a direction for curates, in which these words do occur upon the Lord's prayer: † 'But why do we rather say, Thy kingdom come, than say Let us come into thy kingdom? I answer, that it is to show us, that no man does

obtain the glory of paradise by his own merits, but purely by the grace of God, according to that of the Apostle, *not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us*. It is therefore we say *adveniat*, that is to say, Let thy grace come unto us, and not, Let us arrive at that; because, as was said, we cannot arrive at it by our own merits.'

Secondly, Nicholas de Lyra has made notes upon the whole Bible, and has preserved that little knowledge of the Holy Scriptures which did remain before the Reformation. He wrote these words, at the same time, upon the tenth chapter of St. John: 'The glory of heaven cannot properly be called wages, but a kind of free gift, inasmuch as that only which is paid as a recompense for some labor, is called wages. And the reason of this is, because that an inheritance is distinguished from wages properly so called; just as a son, to whom the inheritance does belong, ought to be distinguished from an hireling, to whom wages are due. Thus the glory of heaven is given to the faithful, as an inheritance is to children, and has not therefore the nature of wages.'

Thirdly, Simon de Cassia, who died in the year 1348, speaks after the same manner, ‡ upon those words, *Call the laborers, and give them hire*; Jesus Christ,' saith he, 'has made use of a soft word, when he said not, their hire, because no man does merit rewards for his good works, nor indeed the greatest wages. Upon which account it is, that he does not add their, but hire only, viz. that which he has from all eternity prepared to bestow upon those that work righteousness.'

The famous Richard, archbishop of Armagh, in his treatise against the errors of the Armenians, speaking of the word *Merces*, does explain himself in these terms: § 'Seeing some certain sort of recompense ought to be given to any one, not upon the account of the condignity of his work, but upon the account of the promise, and so also of the justice of him who gives it, and who promised it only in general; let this sort of recompense be given in any degree whatsoever, one may still call it wages for work.'

Bradwardin, chancellor of Oxford, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, does attack the Pelagians with a vast volume, || wherein he overthrows the doctrine of

* N. 2. dist. 27. q. 2.

† Ch. 2. du traité 3. part. 2.

‡ Lib. 6. c. 21. § Lib. 12. c. 21. || A. 1350.

merit of condignity in several places, vigorously maintaining this proposition, that 'merits are not the cause of eternal reward,' as the doctrine of the sacred Scriptures, and of antiquity.

If any one does still desire a stronger proof than the testimony of these three persons does afford, though because writing in the same time, in places far distant from one another, and upon a popular subject, one might easily believe them for what they say; I may allege the university of Paris, where Guy, a professor and a Carmelite, having propounded this proposition against a Jacobin, 'man does merit eternal life *de condigno*, that is to say, in such a manner, that unless it were given him, he would be injured, and God would wrong himself;' he was forced to recant it as false, heretical, and blasphemous. This was done in the year 1353, by the order of the chancellor of the university, and of several other doctors of the faculty at Paris.

After this recantation, we may see many eminent divines following the opinion of St. Anselme and St. Bernard. One Jacobus de Hauteville, professor at Paris, whose opinion Marsilius ab Ingen does take notice of. Marsilius ab Ingen does formally maintain, that our works, whether considered in themselves, or as the fruit of the grace of God working with us, cannot merit *ex condigno*, which he proves all along by Scripture: and he does determine, on the contrary, that whatsoever is called merit, does depend upon the acceptance of God, through the merit of Jesus Christ. Gerardus de Zutphen, who died four years before Marsilius, was plainly of the same opinion.

Towards the end of that age, Raymondus Jordanus, abbot of Celles in Berry, was of this opinion. They published his books under the name of *Idiota*, but Father Raynaud has made it appear that they were this Raymondus's. Thus he speaks: * 'Tribulation,' says he, 'does not suit well with a past crime which thou dost pardon, nor with the present grace of consolation which thou dost give, nor with the future glory which thou dost freely promise.' These words did displease the censors of the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, who therefore put a *cautè legendum* at the margin;—they were so much afraid, lest they should wholly attribute the praise of our salvation to the mercy of God.

The doctrine of St. Anselme was not for-

* Lib. 2. Contempl. p. 445. T. 5. B. P.

gotten in the fifteenth age, which furnishes us with a great many eminent witnesses who did oppose the merit of condignity.

Petrus de Alliaco, bishop of Cambray, and afterwards a cardinal, does maintain that merits are but improperly called the cause of recompense.

Gerson, chancellor of the university of Paris, a person admired all Europe over in the time of the Council of Constance, does, in his treatise of the Art of Dying, put these words in the mouth of a dying believer; 'O Lord, I implore thy pardon, not for any value of my own merits, but by the virtue and efficacy of thy most holy passion, by the which thou wert willing to redeem me, even me that was miserable, and didst vouchsafe to purchase paradise for me by the price of thy blood. The same Gerson, when he made his will, concluded it with this verse,

Spes mea tu Jesus es, gratia, non opera.

Johannes Waldensis, whose works were examined at Rome, and approved of by Pope Martin V, does at the same time express himself in as precise a manner. When he saw a great party of Thomas Aquinas's opinion concerning merit of condignity, he expresses himself thus: 'I take him for a most holy divine, for a most faithful Catholic, and most agreeing with the Holy Scriptures, who does simply renounce any such merit, and does avow with the moderation of the Apostle and the Scriptures, that no man does simply merit the kingdom of heaven, but by the grace of God, or by the will of him who bestows it.' He proves his opinion by the Sacred Scripture, by the Fathers, by the canon of the Mass, which, speaking of the saints, do import thus much, 'into whose company we pray thee to admit us, not regarding our merit, but granting us pardon.' And in another place he says, 'To the end that we, who do not trust in the quality of merits, may merit not thy judgment but thy mercy.'

I confess, that Waldensis, as learned a man as he was, does take those words of the Mass, *non estimator meriti, sed donator veniæ*, in a wrong sense. It is certain, by the expositions of the ages before Waldensis, that the word *meritum* does not in this place signify good works, but sins; the sense is, 'not regarding our sins, but granting us pardon for them.' Some of those divines have notwithstanding followed the error of Waldensis; but if it be

a fault, the great approbation which they have for the works of Waldensis has authorised it. And it is very probable, that if so learned a man as Waldensis could thus make use of this place of the Mass, there were a great many divines in his time, who understood it in the same sense as he did, more regarding the sound of the terms, than their true signification. However it was, see what he adds; 'God,' saith he, 'according to this Article, has no regard to our merit, either of congruity, or of condignity, but to his own grace, will, and mercy. It is therefore very injurious to our Saviour, and him who crowns us so freely, to dispute so much about merits, without speaking of his grace.'

Paul, bishop of Burgos, one of the most knowing prelates of his time in the Holy Scriptures, did so exactly follow the same opinion, that Cardinal Bellarmine thought himself obliged to join him with Thomas Waldensis, as one of those that did most strongly oppose Thomas Aquinas's opinions concerning this matter.

Biel, who was the first that taught in the university of Tubing, towards the end of the fifteenth age, does explain the merit of condignity in such a manner, as does quite overthrow the same opinions of Thomas, referring all to God's acceptance, positively denying the goodness of an action to be the ground of God's rewarding it, but only his promise, which is the opinion of the ancients, and of Protestants.

Pope Adrian the Sixth, Cardinal Cajetan, and Conrard Kœlin, can easily inform us, what was taught in their time, that is to say, in the first thirty years of the sixteenth age.

See what Adrian had written in the 4. Sententiarum before he was Pope. 'Our merits,' saith he, 'are like a staff of reed, whereon if a man lean, it breaks and pierceth the hand of him that leaneth thereon.' He imitating Isaiah herein, does compare the righteousnesses of man to a piece of menstruous cloth. 'Our Saviour,' writes he, 'then speaks rightly, when he says, *When ye have done all those things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants.*' This doctor, being afterward made pope in the year 1522, caused his works to be printed at Rome, which was done without any contradiction; neither did he ever retract any thing of this doctrine.

Cardinal Cajetan is famous for his con-

ferences with Luther. But as he in his latter days did apply himself to study, and comment upon the Holy Scriptures, see how he expresseth himself upon the sixth chapter, verse 23, of the Epistle to the Romans, following herein the conceptions of St. Austin: 'St. Paul does not say that eternal life is the wages of righteousness, but the *gift of God*, to the end that we may understand that we do not merit eternal life by our merits, but by the free gift of God.' This is his opinion at last. For I know, that though this famous Thomist had before pushed things so far as to maintain, that the good works of the righteous do merit eternal life *ex condigno*, yet there was never any divine covenant made thereupon; as Bellarmine does confess, *ubi supra cap. 16.*

Conrard Kœlin, commenting upon the 'Sum of St. Thomas,' does reflect upon St. Thomas's opinion, that good works receive *quasi mercedem*, that is, as it were a reward, upon the account of the promise of God made to good works, and says that he expressed himself thus; 'because properly speaking, man does not receive a reward, because there is nothing just or due in this retribution,' and he maintains, that in this respect, 'it cannot properly be called a reward.'

Erasmus is so express in this matter in many places, that he was censured for it; and was put in the *Index Expurgatorius*.

Didacus Stella, a famous Cordelier, and confessor to Cardinal Granville, has past through the *Index Expurgatorius* of *Quinoga*, for having taught upon St. Luke, that we do not merit blessedness *ex condigno*.

Josseus Clichtoveus, an eminent doctor of Paris, and a regular of Chartres, does make all the same reflections upon those words of the Mass, *non æstimator meriti, sed donator veniæ*, against the merit of good works, which Waldensis had done before him. Which shows, that our Reformers have only followed the sense which the most eminent divines of the church of Rome had put upon those words. This is in his *Elucid. Ecclesiast.* p. 156, where he says that which Luther, treating upon the same subject, could not have said more.

Johannes Ferus, an eminent Cordelier, and preacher at Mayence, has followed the same opinion, as may be seen in his pieces printed at Paris, with the privilege and approbation of the Sorbonne, in the year 1560. It is true, that, following the

* De Sacram. Euchar. post initium.

† In 2 Thom. q. 114. art. 1.

style of the Inquisition, they have since expunged those places out of his works. And probably this is the reason why there is another edition of them printed at Rome.

Claudius Espensæus, the famous bishop of Evreux, who was present as a doctor at the Council of Trent, does defend Erasmus's opinion, in his Comment upon the Second Epistle to Timothy, and fourth chapter, as conformable to the sentiments of St. Austin, declaring with that ancient doctor, that the *crown of righteousness* is so called, because it is just that God should grant that which he has in his mercy promised, although the thing be not due.

There is a work of Abbot Louis Blasius, who died in the year 1566, printed in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, under the name of Abbot Dacrianus. It is called *Speculum Monachorum*, where he speaks in several places after such a manner, as shows that he was of an opinion directly opposite to merits of condignity. Thus he speaks of the faithful; 'They do not,' says he, 'confidently place the hope of their salvation in the number, or in the merit of the good works which they do, but in the liberty of the children of God, which they have obtained by the blood of Jesus Christ.'

This is the history of what passed, from the twelfth age till the Council of Trent, about the belief of *merit of condignity*.

PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY.

The Doctrine of Justification by Faith Only, leads not to Licentiousness.

A TRUE and lively faith is opposite to the feigned faith of the hypocrite; and a true faith incites a man to good works through love. He, who would be a Christian, must be a believer; but no man is a sound believer, if works of charity do not follow his faith. Thus, on both hands, the Apostle shuts hypocrites out of the kingdom of God. On the left hand, he shuts out all such as depend on their works for salvation, when he says, *Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision*; that is, no kind of work, but faith alone, without any dependence on what we do, avails before God. On the right, he excludes all slothful, idle persons, who are disposed to say, *If faith justifies us without works*, then let us have no anxiety respecting good actions; let us only take care and believe, that we may do whatever we please.—Not so, ye enemies of all godli-

ness. It is true, Paul tells you, that faith alone, without works, justifies;—however, he also tells you, that a true faith, after it has justified, does not permit a man to slumber in indolence, but that it *worketh by love*.

The liberty of the Gospel is an inestimable thing; but take care that ye use it not as an occasion to the flesh.

Satan has not stirred up an evil either more extensive or more destructive than this; namely, when men abuse their Christian liberty to licentiousness. So the Apostle Jude laments: *There are crept in unawares certain unholy men, which turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness*, Jude, ver. 4. For the flesh does not understand the doctrine of grace. Therefore when it hears that we are justified by faith only, it abuses and perverts the doctrine by reasoning thus; 'If we are without law, we may live just as we please.' . . .

Truly religious persons crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; and hence their sins do not finally ruin them. For if they obey the flesh by gratifying its concupiscence, they infallibly lose their faith and the Holy Ghost. Moreover, if they do not abhor their sins, sincerely repent, and return to Christ, that they may recover their faith and the Holy Ghost, they will die in their sins. Wherefore I can speak no comfort to those, who dream they have faith, and yet live in sin. Against all such there is a dreadful sentence in force; namely, *They that live after the flesh shall die*. And further, *the works of the flesh are manifest*;—*adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, &c.* and such like: THEY WHO DO SUCH THINGS, SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The severe threatenings of Almighty God against sin, have a due effect upon the minds of true believers, so as to deter them from breaking his laws. They arm themselves with the word of God, with faith and with prayer, and do not give way to the lusts of the flesh. In fact, they so resist the flesh as to nail it to the cross, with all its sinful desires. Hence it is that the flesh, though yet alive and capable of showing some signs of motion, cannot perform what it would, being bound hand and foot, and nailed fast to the cross. Such are the principles, and such the practice of truly pious persons. The same

important truths may be expressed a little differently, thus; The faithful, while they live on earth, do actually crucify the flesh;—that is, though they are sensible of its lustings, they do not obey them. Furnished with the armour of God, namely, faith, hope, and the sword of the Spirit, they oppose the natural, or carnal man; and with these spiritual arms, as it were with nails, fix him to the cross of Christ; and compel him, against his will, to be subject to the spiritual man or new creature. Afterwards, when they die, they entirely put off the carnal man; and they will rise from the dead with a body incorruptible, and free from sinful affections and lusts.

To teach the doctrine of Justification by Faith without works, and at the same time to insist on the necessity of good works, it must be owned, is a matter of considerable difficulty and danger. For unless the ministers of Christ be wise and faithful dispensers of the divine mysteries, and know how to divide the word of truth rightly, the distinct provinces of faith and works will be confounded. Both these provinces should be explained and impressed on the mind with the greatest diligence, yet in such a manner, that each of them may preserve its proper bounds. Otherwise, if works only are taught, as is the case in the pope's kingdom, faith is lost. Again, if nothing but faith is inculcated, carnal men soon begin to dream that there is no need of good works. How careful is Paul to avoid being misunderstood! In the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter, he had observed that the whole law was fulfilled in one word, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. Indeed!! an objector might say,—Then if so, a man, by works of charity, may fulfil the law and be justified!—which is contrary to the whole Epistle. No, says the Apostle, I have neither forgotten, nor do I now contradict my former argumentation concerning faith. I am precisely of the same opinion; and that ye may perceive me to argue consistently, I add, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*, Gal. v. 16. I do not mean that ye can be justified by the law; but this I mean; there are two principles of action within you, flesh and spirit; and I exhort you to obey the latter, that ye may be enabled to resist the former. It is but to a certain degree that ye can resist it; ye cannot entirely

put off the flesh or kill it; and therefore, when I direct you to *walk in the Spirit*, I sufficiently indicate to you the impossibility of your being justified by works of charity. . . .

You now see therefore how it is that FAITH alone is not sufficient; and yet that faith alone JUSTIFIES; because if the faith be of the right sort, it is infallibly connected with a spirit of true benevolence. But this spirit of benevolence or LOVE cannot endure the works of the flesh; and thus it obeys the law, and attains the kingdom of God. Hence every thing is to be ascribed to faith, as faith is to the WORD, and the WORD to the divine compassion in the sending of the Apostles and preachers; so that all our sufficiency is of God, from whom cometh every best gift.

THESE ARE THE POINTS OF DOCTRINE which ought to be explained to the people: and in the very order in which the Apostle lays them down in this Epistle. For example; let a man first learn to despair of his own strength; let him hear the word of evangelical faith; hearing, let him believe it; believing, let him call upon God; calling upon him, let him find, as he will find, that he is heard; being heard of God, let him receive the spirit of love; receiving this spirit, let him walk in the same, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; but let him crucify them; lastly, being crucified with Christ, let him rise from the dead, and possess the kingdom of heaven.

LUTHER.

We ourselves do not teach Christ alone, excluding our own faith, unto justification; Christ alone, excluding our own works unto sanctification; Christ alone, excluding the one or the other unnecessary unto salvation. It is a childish cavil, wherewith, in the matter of justification, our adversaries do so greatly please themselves, exclaiming, that we tread all Christian virtues under our feet, and require nothing in Christians but faith, because we teach that faith alone justifieth: whereas by this speech we never meant to exclude either hope or charity from being always joined as inseparable mates with faith in the man that is justified; or works from being added as necessary duties, required at the hands of every justified man: but to shew that faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ unto justification; and Christ the only garment, which, being

so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection of our works, preserveth us blameless in the sight of God, before whom, otherwise, the weakness of our faith were cause sufficient to make us culpable, yea, to shut us from the kingdom of heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter. That our dealing with them be not as childish as theirs with us: when we hear of salvation by Christ alone, considering that (alone) as an exclusive particle, we are to note what it doth exclude, and where. If I say, 'Such a judge only ought to determine such a case,' all things incident to the determination thereof, besides the person of the judge, as laws, depositions, evidences, &c. are not hereby excluded; persons are not excluded from witnessing herein, or assisting, but only from determining and giving sentence. How then is our salvation wrought by Christ alone? Is it our meaning, that nothing is requisite to man's salvation, but Christ to save, and he to be saved quietly without any more ado? No, we acknowledge no such foundation. As we have received, so we teach, that besides the bare and naked work, wherein Christ without any other associate finished all the parts of our redemption, and purchased salvation himself alone; for conveyance of this eminent blessing unto us, many things are of necessity required, as, to be known and chosen of God before the foundation of the world; in the world to be called, justified, sanctified; after we have left the world, to be received unto glory; Christ in every of these hath somewhat which he worketh alone. Through him, according to the eternal purpose of God before the foundation of the world, born, crucified, buried, raised, &c. we were in a gracious acceptance, known unto God long before we were seen of men: God knew us, loved us, was kind to us in Jesus Christ; in him we were elected to be heirs of life. Thus far God through Christ hath wrought in such sort alone, that ourselves are mere patients, working no more than dead and senseless matter, wood, stone, or iron, doth in the artificer's hands; no more than clay, when the potter appointeth it to be framed for an honorable use; nay, not so much: for the matter whereupon the craftsman worketh he chooseth, being moved by the fitness which is in it to serve his turn; in us no such thing. Touching the rest which is laid for the foundation of

our faith, it importeth farther, That by him we are called, that we have redemption, remission of sins through his blood, health by his stripes, justice by him; that he doth sanctify his church, and make it glorious to himself, that entrance into joy shall be given us by him; yea, all things by him alone. Howbeit, not so by him alone, as if in us to our vocation, the hearing of the Gospel; to our justification, faith; to our sanctification, the fruits of the Spirit; to our entrance into rest, perseverance in hope, in faith, in holiness, were not necessary.

HOOKE.

Of good works.—By this same Apostle in this chapter, good works are divided into three ranks, for they are either works of piety toward God, or of equity toward our neighbour, or sobriety toward ourselves: and these bring out a threefold fruit, most sweet and excellent: for by them, first, God is glorified; secondly, thy neighbour is edified; thirdly, thy own conscience comforted, and confirmed in the assurance of thy salvation. Of the first speaks the Apostle: *Let servants shew all faithfulness, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*: there we see that our good works are an ornament to the Gospel. Of the second, and first also, speaks our Saviour: *Let your works so shine before men, that they seeing them, may glorify your Father that is in heaven*; there we see that God is glorified by our godly life, and men thereby are edified and moved to do it. Of the third speaks St. Peter: *Make sure your calling and election by well doing*. As every tree is known by the fruit, so works of grace prove those that have them to be a tree planted by predestination in the *paradise of God*, by that *river of the water of life*, and that therefore thy leaf shall not fade, and thy root shall not perish, because thou art rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus, and growest in him, who shall for ever conserve the sap of grace in thy soul.

The adversaries calumniate us, and call us enemies to good works; but God forbid we were so! We condemn no good works, only we condemn their presumptuous opinion of the merit of good works. Meriting causes of salvation they are not, yet are they witnessing effects thereof, without which a man cannot be saved; not that we are saved by them, but because

that justifying faith, which whereby we are saved cannot be without them; *for faith works by love*. In the act of justification, we affirm, good works have no place; for a man must first be justified before he do any good, *Nam sequuntur justificationem*: in the work again of sanctification, they want no place: this doctrine they challenge of novelty, but indeed it is apostolic, consonant also to the doctrine of the ancient and primitive church.

For that assertion of the Apostle, *We conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law*, is equivalent to this, that a man is justified by faith only. And from the Apostle, the ancient fathers have drawn this position, *Sola fide justificamur*. Basil, in his Treatise, *De Confessione fidei*, hath it: 'We have not whereof to glory of righteousness, seeing we are justified by faith only in Christ Jesus;' and more notable is that testimony of Ambrose, *Justificamur gratis quia nihil operantes, neque vicem, reddentes, sola fide justificati sunt, dono Dei*; by this one sentence he cuts away from justification their works, both of congruity and condignity, and annulleth their vain distinction of a first and second justification; and in plain terms he ascribes our justification to faith only in Christ. With these concurs Augustine: *Quod autem sequitur, propterea vos non auditis quia ex Deo non estis, iis dictum est, qui non fuerant credituri ea fide, qua sola possent a peccatorum obligatione liberari*. And passing by many others, we add only the testimony of Bernard: 'Whosoever he be that is pricked in his heart with sorrow of his sins, and hungers and thirsts for righteousness, let him believe in Thee, who justifieth sinners; and so, being justified by faith only, he shall have peace with God.' Let them now cease to glory of antiquity; let them think shame to charge us with novelty, if they be not past all bounds of shame; for it is manifest to the indifferent reader that we teach no other way now, than the Apostles and approved Doctors of elder times have taught before us.

But leaving this, I wish disputing about good works were turned into doing: we have all learned in this age to put good works out of the chair of merit; and justly, for none should sit in that chair but Christ Jesus; but we have not all learned to give them their own place in the matter of salvation: though they be not, as I said, meriting causes, yet are they witnesses of thy

faith, and seals of thy salvation: thou art not now justified by them, yet shalt thou be judged by them, and tried whether thou wert justified in Christ Jesus or not. Oh that our fruitless professors would consider this! Tell me, I pray you, what have ye to witness with you, that ye are Christians? Your word says ye are so; but all your works witness against you: your unclean eyes, your dissolute speech, your vain apparel, your polluted hands, your wandering feet: all these proclaim you to be Pagans; only with your tongues ye say ye are Christians: ye feed not the hungry, ye clothe not the naked, ye visit not the sick; these are the works, and such like, that will be brought out as witnesses, either with us and for us, or then against us. Be not then deceived, to think that thy naked word will prove thee a Christian, when none of the works of Christ can be seen in thee.

But it seems, many professors are feared for the curse of the Pharisees on whom Christ pronounced a woe, because they did their works to be seen of men; they say they do good, but never man saw it: they have not learned that lesson of St. James, ii. 18, *to shew their faith out of their works*; for whom it were better that they should be afraid lest they be cursed with that fig-tree, which afar off seemed fruitful, but when our Lord came near, and looked into it, longing for some fruit, he found none at all, and therefore cursed it.

It was well observed by Augustine, that a good work, if it be done in sincerity, the more public it be, the more profitable it is: as namely, when alms out of a good heart is given in public; not only is he benefited that gets it, but such as see it are edified thereby. Seeing it is so, that our works must be our witnesses, let us all endeavour to be more abundant in them. To move us hereunto, I conclude this point with this twofold consideration: First, when thy soul shall be sundered from thy body, the good thou hast done in thy body shall never be sundered from thyself, but shall go with thee; *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labour, and their works follow them!* Secondly, when thou art dead in thy body, and sundered from men; yet shalt thou still live in thy works, and have thy memory conserved among men: *therefore, so long as we have time, let us do good.*

BP. COWPER.

Our *foundation* in dealing with God is Christ alone, mere grace and pardon in him. Our *building* is in and by holiness and obedience, as the fruits of that faith by which we have received the atonement. And great mistakes there are in this matter, which bring great entanglements on the souls of men. Some are all their days laying of the foundation, and are never able to build upon it, to any comfort to themselves, or usefulness to others. And the reason is, because they will be mixing, with the foundation, stones that are fit only for the following building. They will be bringing their *obedience, duties, mortification of sin*, and the like, into the foundation. These are precious stones to build with, but unmeet to be first laid, to bear upon them the whole weight of the building. The foundation is to be laid, as was said, in *mere grace*, mercy, pardon in the blood of Christ. This the soul is to accept of, and to rest in, merely as it is grace, without the consideration of any thing in itself, but that it is sinful and obnoxious to ruin. This it finds a difficulty in, and would gladly have something of its own to mix with it : it cannot tell how to fix these foundation stones, without some cement of its own endeavours and duty. And because these things will not mix, they spend a fruitless labor about it all their days. But if the foundation be of grace, it is not at all of works; for otherwise grace is no more grace. If any thing of our own be mixed with grace in this matter, it utterly destroys the nature of grace, which, if it be not alone, is not at all. •

But doth not this tend to licentiousness? Doth not this render obedience, holiness, duties, mortification of sin, and good works needless? God forbid! Yea, this is the only way to order them aright unto the glory of God. Have we nothing to do but to lay the foundation? Yes, all our days we are to build upon it, when it is surely and firmly laid. And these are the means and ways of our edification. This, then, is the soul to do, who would come to peace and settlement. Let it let go all former endeavours, if it have been engaged in any of that kind. And let it alone receive, admit of, and adhere to mere grace, mercy, and pardon, with a full sense that in itself it hath nothing for which it should have an interest in them, but that all is of mere grace through Jesus Christ :—*Other foundation can no man lay*. Depart not hence until this work be well over. Surcease not an earnest endeavour with your own hearts, to acquiesce in this righteousness of God, and to bring your souls into a comfortable persuasion that God, for Christ's sake, hath freely forgiven you all your sins. Stir not hence until this be effected. If you have been engaged in any other way, that is, to seek for the pardon of sin by some endeavours of your own, it is not unlikely but that you are filled with the fruit of your own doings; that is, that you go on with all kinds of uncertainties, and without any kind of constant peace. Return, then, again hither. Bring this foundation-work to a blessed issue in the blood of Christ; and when that is done, up and be doing.

DR. OWEN.

SECTION XIV.—ON ADOPTION.

On Christian Adoption.

WE are by nature the sons of Adam. When God created Adam, he created us; and as many as are descended from Adam have in themselves the root, out of which they spring. The sons of God we neither are all, nor any one of us, otherwise than only by grace and favor. The sons of God have God's own natural Son, as a *second Adam from heaven*, whose race and progeny they are by spiritual and heavenly birth. God therefore loving eternally his Son, he must needs, eternally in him, have loved and preferred before all others, them

which are spiritually thence descended and sprung out of him. These were in God as in their Saviour, and not as in their Creator only. It was the purpose of his *saving* goodness, his *saving* wisdom, and his *saving* power, which inclined itself towards them. They which thus were in God eternally by their intended admission to life, have, by vocation or adoption, God actually now in them, as the artificer is in the work, which his hand doth presently frame. Life, as all other gifts and benefits, groweth originally from the Father, and cometh not to us but by the Son; nor by the Son to any of us in particular, but

through the Spirit. For this cause the Apostle wisheth to the church of Corinth, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost*. Which three St. Peter comprehendeth in one—the *participation of Divine nature*. We are therefore in God, through Christ eternally, according to that intent and purpose, whereby we are chosen to be made his in this present world, before the world itself was made: we are in God, through the knowledge which is had of us, and the love which is borne towards us from everlasting. But in God we actually are no longer than only from the time of our actual adoption into the body of his true church, into the fellowship of his children. For his church he knoweth and loveth; so that they which are in the church, are thereby known to be in him. Our being in Christ by eternal foreknowledge saveth us not, without our actual and real adoption into the fellowship of his saints in this present world. For in him we actually are by our actual incorporation into that society which hath him for their Head; and doth make together with him one body, (he and they in that respect having one name) for which cause by virtue of this mystical conjunction, *we are of him, and in him*, even as though our very flesh and bones should be made continue with his. We are in Christ, because he knoweth and loveth us, even as parts of himself. No man actually is in him, but they in whom he actually is. For *he which hath not the Son of God, hath not life. I am the Vine, and ye are the branches: he which abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit*: but the branch, severed from the vine, withereth. We are therefore adopted sons of God to eternal life, by participation of the only-begotten Son of God, whose life is the well-spring and cause of ours. It is too cold an interpretation, whereby some men expound our being in Christ to import nothing else, but only, that the self-same nature which maketh us to be men, is in him, and maketh him man as we are. For what man in the world is there, which hath not so far forth communion with Jesus Christ? It is not this that can sustain the weight of such sentences as speak of the mystery of our coherence with Jesus Christ. The church is in Christ, as Eve was in Adam. Yea, by grace we are every of us in Christ, and in his church, as by nature

we were in those our first parents. God made Eve of the rib of Adam: and his church he frameth out of the very flesh, the very wounded and bleeding side of the Son of man. His body crucified and his blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elements of that heavenly Being, which maketh us such as himself is of whom we come. For which cause the words of Adam may be fitly the words of Christ concerning his church, *flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones*; a true nature extracted out of my own body. So that in him, even according to his manhood, we, according to our heavenly being, are as branches in that Root out of which they grow. To all things he is life, and to men light, as *the Son of God*; to the church, both life and light eternal, by being made the Son of man for us, and by being in us a Saviour, whether we respect him as God, or as man. Adam is in us as an original cause of our nature, and of that corruption of nature which causeth death; Christ as the cause original of restoration to life. The person of Adam is not in us, but his nature, and the corruption of his nature derived into all men by propagation; Christ having Adam's nature, as we have, but incorrupt, deriveth not nature but incorruption, and that immediately from his own person, into all that belong unto him. As therefore we are really partakers of the *body of sin and death* received from Adam; so except we be truly partakers of Christ, and as really possessed of his Spirit, all we speak of eternal life is but a dream. That which quickeneth us is the Spirit of the second Adam, and his flesh that wherewith he quickeneth. That which in him made our nature uncorrupt, was the union of his deity with our nature. And in that respect the sentence of death and condemnation, which only taketh hold upon sinful flesh, could no way possibly extend unto him. This caused his voluntary death for others to prevail with God, and to have the force of an expiatory Sacrifice. *The blood of Christ*, as the Apostle witnesseth, *doth therefore take away sin*, because, *through the Eternal Spirit, he offered himself unto God without spot*. That which sanctified our nature in Christ, that which made it a sacrifice available to take away sin, is the same which quickeneth it, raised it out of the grave after death, and exalted it unto glory. Seeing therefore that Christ is in us as a *quickenings Spirit*,

the first degree of communion with Christ must needs consist in the participation of his Spirit, which Cyprian in that respect well termeth *germanissimam societatem*, the highest and truest society that can be between man and him, which is both God and man in one. These things, St. Cyril duly considering, reproveth their speeches, which taught that only the deity of Christ is the Vine whereupon we by faith do depend as branches, and that neither his flesh nor our bodies are comprised in this resemblance. For doth any man doubt, but that even from the flesh of Christ our very bodies do receive that life which shall make them glorious at the latter day; and for which they are already accounted parts of his blessed body? Our corruptible bodies could never live the life they shall live, were it not that here they are joined with his body, which is incorruptible, and that his is in ours as a cause of immortality; a cause by removing through the death and merit of his own flesh that which hindered the life of ours. Christ is therefore, both as God and as man, that true Vine whereof we both spiritually and corporally are branches. The mixture of his bodily substance with ours is a thing which the ancient fathers disclaim. Yet the mixture of his flesh with ours they speak of, to signify what our very bodies, through mystical conjunction, receive from that vital efficacy which we know to be in his; and from bodily mixtures they borrow divers similitudes, rather to declare the truth than the manner of coherence between his sacred and the sanctified bodies of saints. Thus much no Christian man will deny, that when Christ sanctified his own flesh, giving as God, and taking as man the Holy Ghost, he did not this for himself only, but for our sakes, that the grace of sanctification and life, which was first received in him, might pass from him to his whole race, as malediction came from Adam unto all mankind. Howbeit, because the work of his Spirit to those effects is in us prevented by sin and death possessing us before; it is of necessity, that as well our present sanctification unto newness of life, as the future restoration of our bodies, should presuppose a participation of the grace, efficacy, merit, or virtue of his body and blood; without which foundation first laid, there is no place for those other operations of the Spirit of Christ to ensue. So that Christ imparteth plainly himself by de-

grees. It pleaseth him in mercy to account himself incomplete and maimed without us. But most assured we are, that we all receive of his fulness, because he is in us as a moving and working cause; from which, many blessed effects are really found to ensue, and that in sundry, both kinds and degrees, all tending to eternal happiness. It must be confessed, that of Christ, working as a Creator, and a Governor of the world by providence, all are partakers; not all partakers of that grace, whereby he inhabiteth whom he saveth. Again, as he dwelleth not by grace in all, so neither doth he equally work in all them in whom he dwelleth. 'Whence is it,' saith St. Augustine, 'that some be holier than others are, but because God doth dwell in some more plentifully than in others?' And because the divine substance of Christ is equally in all, his human substance equally distant from all; it appeareth that the participation of Christ, wherein there are many degrees and differences, must needs consist in such effects, as being derived from both natures of Christ really into us, are made our own; and we by having them in us, are truly said to have him from whom they come; Christ also more or less, to inhabit and impart himself, as the graces are fewer or more, greater or smaller, which really flow into us from Christ. Christ is whole with the whole church, and whole with every part of the church, as touching his Person, which can no way divide itself, or be possessed by degrees and portions. But the participation of Christ importeth, besides the presence of Christ's Person, and besides the mystical copulation thereof, with the parts and members of his whole church, a true actual influence of grace whereby the life which we live according to godliness, is his; and from him we receive those perfections wherein our eternal happiness consisteth. Thus we participate Christ, partly by imputation; as when those things which he did, and suffered for us, are imputed unto us for righteousness; partly by habitual and real infusion, as when grace is inwardly bestowed while we are on earth, and afterwards more fully, both our souls and bodies made like unto his in glory. The first thing of his so infused into our hearts in this life, is the Spirit of Christ; whereupon, because the rest, of what kind soever, do all both necessarily depend and infallibly also ensue; there-

fore the Apostles term it, sometimes the seed of God, sometimes the pledge of our heavenly inheritance, sometimes the hanel or earnest of that which is to come. From whence it is, that they which belong to the mystical body of our Saviour Christ, and be in number as the stars of heaven, divided successively, by reason of their mortal condition, into many generations, are notwithstanding coupled every one to Christ their Head, and all unto every particular person amongst themselves, inasmuch as the same Spirit, which anointed the blessed soul of our Saviour Christ, doth so formalise, unite and actuate his whole race, as if both he and they were so many limbs compacted into one body, by being quickened all with one and the same soul. That wherein we are partakers of Jesus Christ by imputation, agreeth equally unto all that have it. For it consisteth in such acts and deeds of his, as could not have longer continuance, than while they were in doing, nor at that very time belong unto any other, but to him from whom they come; and therefore how men, either then, or before, or since, should be made partakers of them, there can be no way imagined, but only by imputation. Again, a deed must either not be imputed to any, but rest altogether in him, whose it is; or if at all it be imputed, they which have it by imputation, must have it such as it is, whole. So that degrees being neither in the personal presence of Christ, nor in the participation of those effects which are ours by imputation only; it resteth, that we wholly apply them to the participation of Christ's infused grace; although, even in this kind also, the first beginning of life, the seed of God, the first-fruits of Christ's Spirit, be without latitude. For we have hereby only the being of the sons of God, in which number how far soever one may seem to excel another, yet touching this that all are sons, they are all equals, some happily better sons than the rest are, but none any more a son than another. Thus therefore we see, how the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; how they both are in all things, and all things in them; what communion Christ hath with his church, how his church and every member thereof, is in him by original derivation, and he personally in them, by way of mystical association, wrought through the gift of the Holy Ghost, which they that are his receive from him, and

together with the same, what benefit soever the vital force of his body and blood may yield; yea, by steps and degrees they receive the complete measure of all such divine grace as doth sanctify and save throughout, till the day of their final exaltation to a state of fellowship in glory with him, whose partakers they are now in those things that tend to glory.

HOOKE.

The believer is adopted into the family of God, and admitted to all the honor and felicity of his beloved children. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God!* 1 John iii. 1. *According as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace,* Eph. i. 3-14. He therefore thus addresses us by his word, *Come out from among them, and be separate; and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty,* 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. This call being accompanied by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, our minds are influenced to obey it: thus we are brought to repentance, and faith in Christ, our sins are pardoned, and we pass from the family and kingdom of the wicked one into the household of God, by a gracious *adoption*. This term was borrowed from the custom of the ancients, who frequently took the children of other persons, and by a solemn legal process received them into their own families, gave them their names, educated them as their own, and left them their estates. Thus regeneration communicates a divine nature, and makes us the children of God; and adoption recognises us as such, and admits us to the enjoyment of the privileges belonging to that relation, and so pardoned rebels become the children and heirs of the Almighty and Everlasting God, *by faith in Jesus Christ,* Gal. iii. 26. But what words can express the value of this distinguished privilege? The adoption of the meanest beggar, or the vilest traitor, into the family of the greatest monarch, to be the heir of all his dignities, would produce but a trivial alteration in his circumstances: for vexation,

sickness, and death would still await him; and the distance between the mightiest and the most abject of men, or creatures, is as nothing compared with that which subsists between the great Creator and all the works of his hands, Isa. xl. 13-26. This adoption is not a mere name; it is a substantial good, an honor, a dignity, and an advantage which eclipses, and, as it were, swallows up all other benefits which can be obtained by any creature. *If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*: and we may be sure that every thing, which can prepare us for our incorruptible and eternal inheritance, and put us in possession of it, will be conferred by the love and bounty of our Almighty Friend and Father. But we know not what we shall be:—*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Lest, however, we should imagine that any possible honor, advantage, or felicity was excepted, when the inheritance of the children of God was mentioned; he has been pleased to expand our views and enlarge our expectations, by language taken from all the other most endeared relations of life. The obedient disciples of Christ are *his brethren, his sisters, and his mother*; yea, their *Maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name!* Isa. liv. 5. Matt. xii. 46-50. Eph. v. 25-27.

They who are thus adopted into the family of God receive *the Spirit of adoption*, instead of the *Spirit of bondage*, and are encouraged to say, *Abba, Father!* or to address him as their Father, whatever language they speak, or to whatever country they belong. We must understand this expression merely as denoting a confidence that God is our Father: for believers are often actuated by *the Spirit of adoption*, when harassed with doubts whether they be the children of God or not; and many have an overbearing confidence of their adoption, while their actions demonstrate that they belong to another family. John viii. 41-47. The Spirit of adoption indeed as properly belongs to the believer's temper and character, as to his privileges; yet it is necessary here to observe in general, that the Holy Spirit, by producing in us that disposition towards God which a dutiful son bears towards a wise and good father, manifests our regeneration and

adoption, and *bears witness with our spirits, that we are the children and heirs of God*: and, while we feel our minds habitually influenced to seek him in all our difficulties; to revere him, trust, love, and obey him; to seek his glory, and rejoice in the success of the Gospel and the prosperity of his people; we have *a witness in ourselves* that we are born of God, and adopted into his family; even though weakness of faith, misapprehension, or temptation, should create a hesitation in our minds, whilst addressing him as our Father. This privilege, therefore, consists in the liberty of approaching the Lord at all times and for all things; of entrusting all our concerns in his hands, and of considering them all as managed by him, in perfect wisdom, truth, and love, for our present and everlasting good. Indeed the very disposition, produced by the Spirit of adoption, is our privilege, and constitutes the *seal*, the *first-fruits*, and the *earnest* of our felicity. Rom. viii. 14-17. Gal. iv. 6, 7. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Eph. i. 13.

R&V. THOS. SCOTT.

That spiritual and divine adoption, about which we treat, is *God's gracious admission of strangers and aliens into the state, relation, and enjoyment of all the privileges of children, through Jesus Christ*; according to that glorious promise of the new Covenant, *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*, 2 Cor. vi. 18. Reconciliation, and adoption, may be thus distinguished. In *reconciliation*, God is considered as the sovereign Lord, and the injured party, and the sinner as an enemy to him. In *justification*, our Maker sustains the character of the Supreme Judge, and man is considered as a guilty criminal standing before his tribunal. In *adoption*, the Source of all mercies appears as a Father, and the apostate sons of Adam as aliens from him; as belonging to the family of Satan, and denominated *children of wrath*. In reconciliation we are made *friends*, in justification we are pronounced *righteous*, and in adoption we are constituted *heirs*, and have a declared right to the eternal inheritance.

That believers are the children of God, the Scriptures expressly declare. They may be so called, as they are *begotten*.

and *born* from above; as they stand in a *marriage-relation* to Christ, and as they are *adopted* into the heavenly family. These different ways in which the Scripture speaks of their filial relation to God, are intended to aid our feeble conceptions when we think upon the grand ineffable blessing; one mode of expression supplying, in some degree, the ideas that are wanting in another. To express the original of spiritual life, and the restoration of the divine image, we are said to be *born of God*. To set forth, in the liveliest manner, our most intimate and delightful union with the Son of the Highest, we are said to be *married* to Christ. That we might never forget the misery of our natural condition, as a state of alienation from God, and at the same time to intimate to us our title to the heavenly patrimony, we are said to be *adopted* by him. The condition, therefore, of all believers, is most noble and excellent. Their high *birth*, their divine Husband, and everlasting inheritance, loudly proclaim it. The beloved Apostle was so amazed at the love of God, manifested in the privilege of adoption, that he could not forbear crying out, with astonishment and rapture, *Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called THE SONS OF GOD!*—Here grace reigns. The vessels of mercy were predestinated to the enjoyment of this honor and happiness before the world began. The great Lord of all chose them for himself, chose them for his children, that they might be *heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ*. This he did, not because of any worthiness in them, but of his own sovereign will. As it is written, *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace*, Eph. i. 5, 6. *According to the good pleasure of his will*; this is the eternal source of the heavenly blessing. *By Jesus Christ*; this is the way of its communication to the sinner. *To the praise of his glorious grace*; this is the end of bestowing it.

The persons adopted are sinners of Adam's race; such who, considered in their natural state, are estranged from God, and guilty before him, under sentence of death, and obnoxious to ruin. Their translation, therefore, out of this deplorable condition, into a state and relation

so glorious, is an instance of reigning, triumphant, boundless grace. That the children of wrath should become the inheritors of glory, and the slaves of the devil be acknowledged as the sons of Jehovah; that the enemies of God should ever be adopted into his family, and have an indefeasible right to all the privileges of his children; are astonishing to the last degree.

ABRAHAM BOOTH.

The Abundance of Grace.

THE Apostle says not grace, but *abundance of grace*. For we receive, not barely what may suffice to obtain our pardon, but incomparably more. We are delivered from all punishment, and from every evil. We are justified, we are sanctified, made the children of God, and the brethren of his only-begotten Son. We are constituted heirs, joint heirs with the Prince of heaven. Yea, we become the members of his body; most intimately and indissolubly united to that Divine Head.

All these privileges St. Paul styles *the abundance of grace*: intimating that the antidote is not only qualified to counteract and expel the poison, but is sovereign also to establish health, to create beauty, to impart honor, and from the most malignant of all evils to produce the most distinguished blessings: any one of which, separately considered, would have been sufficient to overcome and disarm death: but, under their *combined* influence, it is absolutely destroyed, it vanishes entirely away, and leaves not so much as a trace of mischief, or a shadow of terror.

Let us suppose some poor debtor owing a considerable sum, and, for want of payment, cast into prison. A generous friend, pitying his condition, discharges the whole debt, and releases him from confinement: and not this only, but bestows on him splendid apparel, with thousands of silver and gold; introduces him to court, and recommends him to the royal favor; procures his advancement to the highest honors, and puts him in possession of the grandest preferments. Where now is the disgrace of his imprisonment? and where are the distresses of his insolvent state?

Such is the case with regard to us sinners, and our most gracious Redeemer. He has paid inconceivably more than we either did or could possibly owe. Being God, the true God, the infinite and eternal God, his payment exceeds our debt, as

much as the waters of the great deep exceed the small drop of a bucket. Doubt not, therefore, poor sinner, that fliest for refuge to this all-glorious Saviour; doubt not but thy sins, though more virulent than all plagues, are done away; and death, though he be the king of terrors, is abolished; this abolished, and those done away, before *such* grace and merit; even as a spark of fire is extinguished when plunged into the abyss of the sea.

REV. J. HERVEY.

The Immensity of God's Pardoning Love.

FORGIVENESS that is with God, is such as becomes him; such as is suitable to his greatness, goodness, and all other excellencies of his nature; such as that therein he will be known to be God. What he says concerning some of the works of his providence, *Be still, and know that I am God*, may be much more said concerning this great effect of his grace; 'Still your souls, and know that he is God.' It is not like that narrow, difficult, halving, and manacled forgiveness that is found amongst men, when any such thing is found amongst them; but it is full, free, boundless, bottomless, absolute, such as becomes his nature and excellencies. It is, in a word, forgiveness that is with God, and by the exercise whereof he will be known so to be. . . .

For the most part, when we come to deal with God about forgiveness, we hang in every briar of disputing, quarrelsome unbelief. This or that circumstance of aggravation, this or that unparalleled particular, bereave us of our confidence. Want of a due consideration of him with whom we have to do, measuring him by that line of our own imagination, bringing him down unto our thoughts and our ways, is the cause of all our disquietments. Because we find it hard to forgive our pence, we think he cannot forgive talents. But he hath provided to obviate such thoughts in us, *I will not execute the fierceness of my wrath, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man.* Hos. xi. 9. Our satisfaction in this matter is to be taken from his nature. Were he a man or as the sons of men, it were impossible that upon such and so many provocations, he should turn away from the fierceness of his anger. But he is God. This gives an infiniteness and an incon-

ceivable boundlessness to the forgiveness that is with him, and exalts it above all our thoughts and ways. . . .

God engageth his infinite excellencies to demonstrate the greatness and boundlessness of his forgiveness. He proposeth them unto our considerations, to convince us that we shall find pardon with him suitable and answerable unto them. See Isa. xl. 27-31; *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not be faint.* The matter in question is, whether acceptance with God, which is only by forgiveness, is to be obtained or not? This sinful Jacob either despairs of, or at least desponds about it. But saith God, *My thoughts are not your thoughts* in this matter. And what course doth he take to convince them of their mistake therein? What argument doth he make use of to free them from their unbelief, and to rebuke their fears? Plainly he calls them to the consideration of Himself, both who and what he is with whom they had to do; that they might expect acceptance and forgiveness, such as did become him. Minding them of his power, his immensity, his infinite wisdom, his unchangeableness, all the excellencies and properties of his nature, he demands of them, whether they have not just ground to expect forgiveness and grace above all their thoughts and apprehensions, because answering the infinite largeness of his heart, from whence it doth proceed. And Moses manageth this plea for the forgiveness of that people under a high provocation, and a most severe threatening of their destruction therein, Numb. xiv. 17, 18. He pleads for pardon in such a way and manner as may answer the great and glorious properties of the nature of God, and which would manifest an infiniteness of power and all-sufficiency to be

in him. . . . Now this is like Himself, such as becomes him, that answers the infinite perfections of his nature, that is exercised and given forth by him as God. But we are apt to narrow and straiten it by our unbelief, and to render it unbecoming of him. He less dishonours God, (or as little) who being wholly under the power of the law, believes that there is no forgiveness with him, none to be obtained from him; or doth not believe it, that so it is, or is so to be obtained; for which he hath the voice and sentence of the law to countenance him; than those who, being convinced of the principles and grounds of it before mentioned, and of the truth of the testimony given unto it, do yet, by straitening and narrowing of it, render it unworthy of him whose excellencies are all infinite, and whose ways on that account are incomprehensible. If then we resolve to treat with God about this matter, let us do it as it becomes his greatness, that is, indeed,

as the wants of our souls do require: let us not entangle our own spirits by limiting his grace. . . .

If there be any pardon with God, it is such as becomes him to give. When he pardons, he will abundantly pardon. Go with your half-forgiveness, limited, conditional pardons, with reserves and limitations, unto the sons of men; it may be, it may become them, it is like themselves; that of God is absolute and perfect, before which our sins are as a cloud before the east wind and the rising sun. Hence he is said to do this work with his whole heart and his whole soul; freely, bountifully, largely to indulge and forgive unto us our sins, and to "cast them into the bottom of the sea," into a bottomless ocean, an emblem of infinite mercy. Mic. vii. 19. Remember this, poor souls, when you are to deal with God in this matter,—all things are possible unto them that believe.

DR. OWEN.

SECTION XV.—ON SANCTIFICATION.

Necessity of Sanctification.

GOD, who is absolute goodness, cannot love any of his creatures and take pleasure in them, without bestowing a communication of his goodness and likeness upon them. God cannot make a Gospel to promise men life and happiness hereafter without being regenerated, and made partakers of his holiness. As soon may heaven and hell be reconciled together, and lovingly shake hands with one another, as God can be fondly indulgent to any sin, in whomsoever it be. As soon may light and darkness be espoused together, and midnight be married to the noon-day, as God can be joined in a league of friendship to any wicked soul.

The great design of God in the Gospel is, to clear up this mist of sin and corruption which we are here surrounded with, and to bring up his creatures out of the *shadow of death* to the region of light above, the land of truth and holiness. The great mystery of the Gospel is to establish a godlike frame and disposition of spirit, which consists in righteousness and true holiness, in the hearts of men. And Christ, who is the great and mighty Saviour, came on purpose into the world,

not only to save us from *fire and brimstone*, but also to save us from our *sins*. Christ hath therefore made an expiation of our sins by his death upon the cross, that we being thus *delivered out of the hands of these our greatest enemies*, might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. This grace of God that bringeth salvation hath therefore appeared unto all men, in the Gospel, that it might teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things I write unto you, (saith our Apostle a little before my text) that you sin not: therein expressing the end of the whole Gospel, which is, not only to cover sin, by spreading the purple robe of Christ's death and sufferings over it, whilst it still remaineth in us with all its filth and noisomeness unremoved; but also to convey a powerful and mighty spirit of holiness, to cleanse us and free us from it. And

this is a greater grace of God to us than the former, which still go both together in the Gospel; besides the free remission and pardon of sin in the *blood of Christ*, the delivering of us from the power of sin by the *Spirit of Christ* dwelling in our hearts.

Christ came not into the world only to cast a mantle over us, and hide all our filthy sores from God's avenging eye with his merits and righteousness; but he came likewise to be a Chirurgeon and Physician of souls, to free us from the filth and corruption of them; which is more grievous and burdensome, more noisome to a true Christian, than the guilt of sin itself.

Should a poor wretched and diseased creature, that is full of sores and ulcers, be covered all over with purple, or clothed with scarlet, he would take but little contentment in it whilst his sores and wounds remain upon him: and he had much rather be arrayed in rags, so he might obtain but soundness and health within. The Gospel is a true Bethesda, a pool of grace, where such poor, lame, and infirm creatures as we are, upon the moving of God's Spirit in it, may descend down, not only to wash our skin and outside, but also to be cured of our diseases within. And whatever the world thinks, there is a powerful Spirit that *moves* upon these *waters*, the waters of the Gospel, spreading its gentle, healing, quickening wings over our souls. The Gospel is not like Abana and Pharpar, those common rivers of Damascus, that could only cleanse the outside; but is a true Jordan, in which such leprous Naamans, as we all are, may *wash and be clean*. *Blessed indeed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*: but yet rather blessed are they whose sins are like a *morning cloud*, and quite taken away from them. *Blessed, thrice blessed, are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied: blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* CUDWORTH.

Sanctification the End of the Divine Counsels in Redemption.

THE Sanctification of believers, whence all their holiness is derived, was the end of the Divine counsels in Redemption. Our minds are impressed with reverential awe,

whilst our thoughts are carried back to the original source of all their spiritual blessings,—the everlasting love of God towards them in Jesus Christ. This love is free, and unmerited; it was not fixed upon them from a respect to that purity and excellence, which it was foreseen they would possess; but rather, it determined upon the means, by which they should in due season be brought to that state. However deep and mysterious this matter be, yet such is the order of things; as described in the sacred oracles. *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY, and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will*, Rom. viii. 30. Eph. i. 4, 5. Nothing therefore can be more preposterous, than for persons to presume upon their election, who give no diligence *to make their calling sure*, or to boast of their calling, while negligent of good works and destitute of internal purity. But let these doctrines be properly arranged, and sanctification will be allowed to have a close and necessary connexion with God's sovereign and righteous purposes of bringing his people to everlasting glory.

It was one part of the design of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice. We say not how many important objects were intended to be answered by his death, but it was surely not the least considerable to obtain grace for all who should believe in him, to rescue them from the dominion and the love of sin, to cleanse them from its defilement, and to subdue them to a state of holy obedience and cheerful subjection to himself. Such is the account of his Apostle: *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:—wherefore, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate*, Titus ii. 14. Heb. xiii. 12. Such also is his own declaration: *For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.—Lo, I come to do thy will, O God:—by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*, John xvii. 19. Heb. x. 9, 10. The graces of the Holy Spirit are imparted

to us only in consequence of this oblation ; and therefore after the Saviour had been *delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification,—when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ; yea, to the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them*, Rom. iv. 25. Eph. iv. 8. Ps. lxviii. 18. Shall we then contend for the atonement, and shew no desire that it may produce its intended efficacy upon our minds, in *purging our conscience from dead works, that we may serve the living God*? Heb. ix. 14. Shall we derive hope and consolation from the cross, and not learn from it to abominate sin, and to seek for that influence by which alone we can be renewed in holiness? And without holiness, how will it appear that we are partakers of redemption?

It is the great object, for which the Spirit's influence is exerted in the minds of believers. His operations are various; he communicates to them in different degrees light, and strength, and comfort; but whatever is in them of real excellency *he worketh all in all*, 1 Cor. xii. 6. By him they are guided into all truth, and cheered with the hope of their adoption: but his chief work, and that to which the other parts of his office are subservient, is the gradual transformation of their souls into the divine image. Thus they are *changed from glory to glory*, from one degree of grace to another; they *mortify the deeds of the body*, and produce that fruit, which is *in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Rom. viii. 13. Eph. v. 9. *The Sanctification of the Spirit*, as if the term comprised the whole of his influence, is that, through which *the elect of God* are conducted *unto obedience* here, and hereafter *to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 2. Should this therefore be lightly esteemed by any of those especially who profess to have received *the Spirit of wisdom*, and *to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost*? How forcible and how pertinent is the exhortation, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*! Gal. v. 25. There is no other way of manifesting the divine life in our souls, produced by his agency, than by our continued progress and steadfast perseverance in holiness even to the end.

It is the chief excellence and glory of

the redeemed of the Lord. Much is done for them in various ways, and very exalted are their privileges. But all is little, compared to this, that they are *conformed to the image of Christ*. They are *called to be saints*, Rom. i. 7; that is, to be sanctified or made holy persons: it is the end, for which they are brought to the knowledge of Christ; and it is the highest honour which he bestows upon them. This is the peculiar distinction, which the Psalmist celebrates as adorning the spouse of the heavenly Bridegroom, *the King's daughter is all glorious within*, Ps. xlv. 13. And it is the same spiritual beauty, which when perfected will shine with so much splendor in the bright world above, and excite the admiration of men and angels: for he will *present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,—holy, and unblameable, and unreprouceable in his sight*, Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*, and praises shall for ever ascend unto Him *who hath made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*, Matt. xiii. 43. Col. i. 12. Should not this work engage our highest estimation? Let us admire whatever fruits or evidences of it we perceive in others, and hope and long and pray for its completion in ourselves.

REV. T. ROBINSON.

Nature of Sanctification.

SANCTIFICATION is the renewing of our nature according to the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, which is but begun in this life, and is called Sanctification, and perfected in the life to come, which therefore is most strictly called *glory*.

How far forth is our nature renewed in this life by Sanctification?

This renewing is of our whole nature, 1 Thess. v. 23; Rom. xii. 2; the understanding being enlightened, the will rectified, the affections regulated, the outward man reformed. But not wholly in this life; and this is done by the powerful operation of the Spirit of God, who *having begun a good work in us, will perfect it unto the day of the Lord*, John xiii. 6. Ps. li. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

What be the parts of our sanctification?

Two, answerable to the two powerful means whereby they are wrought; first,

mortification, or dying unto sin, and thereby freedom from the dominion thereof by the death of Christ, Rom. vi. 6, 7.

Secondly, vivification, or quickening unto newness of life, by the power of the resurrection of Christ.

How doth Sanctification differ from the former grace of Justification?

In many main and material differences ; as,

First, in the order, not of time, wherein they go together, Rom. viii. 30, nor of knowledge and apprehension, wherein this latter hath precedence, 1 Cor. vi. 11, but of nature, wherein the former is the ground of this latter, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Secondly, in the subject : the righteousness whereby we are justified being inherent in Christ for us ; but this of sanctification in ourselves from him, Rom. viii. 10.

Thirdly, in the cause : our justification following from the merit ; our sanctification from the efficacy of the death and life of Christ, Eph. i. 19. ii. 1.

Fourthly, in the instrument : faith, which in justification is only as an hand receiving, in sanctification is a co-working virtue, Acts xv. 19. Gal. v. 6.

Fifthly, in the measure : justification being in all believers, and at all times alike ; but sanctification wrought differently and by degrees, 2 Cor. iii. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

Sixthly, in the end ; which being in both *eternal life*, Rom. vi. 23, 24 ; yet the one is among the causes of reigning, the other only as the highway unto the kingdom.

ABP. USHER.

From what hath hitherto been discoursed, I hope the difference between both covenants clearly appears, and that the Gospel was not brought in only to hold forth a new platform and model of religion ; it was not brought in only to refine some notions of truth, that might formerly seem discoloured and disfigured by a multitude of legal rites and ceremonies ; it was not to cast our opinions concerning the way of life and happiness only into a new mould and shape in a pedagogical kind of way : it is not so much a system and body of saving divinity, but the spirit and vital influx of it spreading itself over all the powers of men's souls, and quickening them into a divine life : it is not so properly a doctrine that is wrapt

up in ink and paper, as it is *vitalis scientia*, a living impression made upon the soul and spirit. We may in a true sense be as legal as ever the Jews were, if we converse with the gospel as a thing only without us ; and be as far short of the righteousness of God as they were, if we make the righteousness which is of Christ by faith to serve us only as an outward covering, and endeavour not after an internal transformation of our minds and souls into it. The Gospel does not so much consist *in verbis* as *in virtute* : neither doth the evangelical dispensation therefore please God so much more than the legal did, because, as a finer contrivance of his infinite understanding, it more clearly discovers the way of salvation to the minds of men ; but chiefly because it is a more powerful efflux of his divine goodness upon them, as being the true seed of a happy immortality continually thriving and growing on to perfection. I shall add further, the Gospel does not therefore hold forth such a transcendent privilege and advantage above what the law did, only because it acquaints us that Christ our true high priest is ascended up into the holy of holies, and there, instead of the blood of bulls and goats, hath sprinkled the ark and mercy-seat above with his own blood : but also because it conveys that blood of sprinkling into our defiled consciences, to purge them from dead works. Far be it from me to disparage in the least the merit of Christ's blood, his becoming obedient unto death, whereby we are justified. But I doubt sometimes some of our dogmata and notions about justification may puff us up in far higher and goodlier conceits of ourselves than God hath of us ; and that we profanely make the unspotted righteousness of Christ to serve only as a covering wherein to wrap up our foul deformities and filthy vices ; and when we have done, think ourselves in as good credit and repute with God as we are with ourselves, and that we are become heaven's darlings as much as we are our own. I doubt not but the merit and obedience of our Saviour gain us favour with God, and potently move down the benign influences of heaven upon us : but yet I think we may sometimes be too lavish and wanton in our imaginations, in fondly conceiting a greater change in the esteem which God hath of us than becomes us, and too little

reckon upon the real and vital emanations of his favour upon us.

REV. J. SMITH.

A man may be sanctified, and yet be but almost a Christian. Every kind of Sanctification doth not make a man a new creature; for many are sanctified that are never renewed. You read of them that *count the blood of the covenant, wherewith they are sanctified, an unholy thing. . . .*

There is a twofold work of Sanctification spoken of in Scripture.

The one, common and ineffectual.

The other, special and effectual.

The work of Sanctification which is true and effectual, is a working of the Spirit of God in the soul, enabling it to the mortifying of all sin, to the obeying of every command, *to walking with God in all well-pleasing.*

Now, whoever is thus sanctified, is one with him that sanctifieth. Christ will not be ashamed to call such brethren; for they are *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.*

But then there is a more common work of Sanctification, which is ineffectual as to the two great works of dying to sin, and living to God. This kind of Sanctification may help to restrain sin, but not to mortify sin; it may lop off the boughs, but it layeth not the axe to the root of the tree; it sweeps and garnishes the room with common virtues, but doth not adorn it with saving graces; so that a man is but almost a Christian, notwithstanding this Sanctification.

Or thus, there is an inward and outward Sanctification.

Inward Sanctification is that which deals with the soul and its faculties, understanding, conscience, will, memory, and affections. Outward Sanctification is that which deals with the life and conversation. Both these must concur to make a man a Christian indeed: therefore, the Apostle puts them together in his prayer for the Thessalonians. *The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* A man is then sanctified wholly, when he is sanctified both inwardly and outwardly—both in heart and affections, and in life and conversation. Outward Sanctification is not enough without inward, nor inward without outward:

we must have both *clean hands and a pure heart.* The heart must be pure, that we may not incur blame from within; and the hands must be clean, that we may not incur shame from without. We must have hearts *sprinkled from an evil conscience, and bodies washed with pure water.* *We must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.* Inward purity is the most excellent, but without the outward, it is not sufficient; the true Christian is made up of both.

MATTHEW MEADE.

Sanctification is the work alone of Divine Grace.

THE nature of this work, that wherein the very being of this purifying consists, is, *the receiving, or obeying of this truth.* So Gal. iii. 1, where it is put for right believing. The chief point of obedience is believing; the proper obedience to truth is, to give credit to it; and this divine belief doth necessarily bring the whole soul into obedience and conformity to that pure truth which is in the word; and so the very purifying and renewing of the soul is this obedience of faith, as unbelief is its chief impurity and disobedience; therefore, Acts xv. 9, Faith is said to *purify the heart.*

The chief worker of this Sanctification, is, *the Holy Spirit of God.* They are said here to *purify themselves*, for it is certain and undeniable, that the soul itself doth act in believing or obeying the truth; but not of itself, it is not the first principle of motion. They purify their souls, but it is *by the Spirit.* They do it by His enlivening power, and a purifying virtue received from Him. Faith, or obeying the truth, works this purity, but the Holy Ghost works that faith: as in the fore-cited place, God is said to *purify their hearts by Faith*, ver. 9. He doth that by giving them the Holy Ghost. The truth is pure, and purifying, yet can it not of itself purify the soul, but by the obeying or believing of it; and the soul cannot obey or believe but by the Spirit which works in it that faith, and by that faith purifies it, and works love in it.

LEIGHTON.

Without the communion of Jesus Christ, there is no sanctification. St. Peter teaches us, that it is owing to the

sanctification of the Spirit, that we are brought *unto obedience* of the faith, and *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 2. If, to be cleansed, we must be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit; let us not presume that, before this divine sprinkling, we are different from other sinners who are not in communion with Jesus. To obtain and enjoy salvation, we ought neither to be wise in our own conceit, nor to have any will of our own; but to follow the Lord step by step, and never to lose sight of him.

That great change, which St. Paul calls being *renewed in the spirit of our mind*, Eph. iv. 23, was unknown to philosophers, though it is the first entrance into life. They teach that reason alone must have the sovereign power over man; they imagine that we ought to listen to its dictates, and blindly follow its light; and that for this purpose we should resign the government of life to it. The doctrine of Christ, on the contrary, requires that reason should submit, that it should retire and give place to the Holy Spirit, and be humbled and subdued under his discipline; in order that man may no longer live, but that Jesus Christ may live and reign uncontrolled in his heart. CALVIN.

That work of God which produces our sanctification, is performed by a real supernatural and most powerful efficacy, reaching to the full effect, as we have already intimated, when treating on effectual calling and regeneration. *For we are his workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works*, Eph. ii. 10. By the very same power, which was displayed and exerted in the work of the old creation, he forms his own people to good works, or, which is the same thing, he sanctifies them. *He gives an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear*, Deut. xxix. 4. *He puts his Spirit within them, and causes them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments*, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. *He gives them one heart and one way, that they may fear him for ever*, Jer. xxxii. 39. And certainly none is fit to form again the image of God in man, but he who at first made man after his own image; the one being a work of no less power and excellence than the other. . .

Nature itself and man's conscience teach him these two things: 1st. Our inability

for virtue. 2dly. The all-sufficiency of God, whereby he is the fountain and the author of all true good. Of the former Epictetus apud Arrianum, lib. 2. c. 11. says, "The beginning of philosophy to those who enter into it by the gate as they ought, is a sense of their own impotence and inability." Of the latter, Maximus Tyrius, Dissert. 22. "We are not to imagine, that any good can befall men but what comes from God: as there is no good to men which derives not its original from God."

From those generals, the heathen themselves have proved these more particular propositions: 1st. That to the acquisition and practice of virtue, men stand in need of divine assistance and grace. Hierocles, a Pythagorean philosopher, has excellently taught this in these words: 'We are not so much as to preconceive, that virtuous actions are so in our power as to be performed without divine aid: we stand in need of the assistance of God, both for escaping evil and acquiring good.' 2dly. That from a sense of our own impotence, we are to ask it of God, Epictet. apud Arrianum, lib. 2. c. 18. 'Noble is the struggle, and divine the enterprise, the subject a kingdom, liberty, happiness, calm of mind unruffled by passions. Are all concerned? therefore remember God, call him in for thy assistant, thy associate.' See also Seneca, Epist. 10. and 41. and Marc. Antonin. lib. 2. § 40. 3dly. That we are to thank God for it, Epictet. apud Arrian. lib. 4. c. 4. 'Then I sinned, now I do not, THANKS BE TO GOD.'

But they did not imagine, that this divine assistance consisted only in moral suasion, or in presenting such objects whereby a man may be excited to virtuous actions; but in divine suggestions, aids and inspirations, as the emperor Antonine speaks, lib. 1. § 17.; who, in the same place, declares, that he had a good disposition of mind from the gods, which he ascribes to their beneficence: lib. 9. § 40. he mentions their co-operation; 'for, if they can at all co-operate with men, they also can in this,' namely, in the practice of virtue. But if any should except, that these relate to things in our own power, he answers, 'who has told thee that the gods do not assist even in these? Set about asking these things of the gods by prayer, and you will see the consequence.'

And they maintained, that the same divine aid was so necessary to virtue, that even the best disposed souls could not be without it. Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. 22. p. 228. says, 'but they who have acquired the very best natural disposition of soul, halting between the highest virtue and the lowest vice, stand in need of the divine aid, to give the proper bias and direction to the better side. For their natural weakness makes them easily take the worst path. This by means of pleasures and lusts, flatters even well-disposed souls, and hurries them into the same paths of vice.'

It is therefore really a shame that heathen writers have entertained more humble sentiments of the infirmity and inability of our nature for good, and clearer conceptions of the divine assisting grace, and have said finer things about imploring it by prayer, than those professors of the excellency of the Christian religion, who ought to have put a due value on the holiness of true virtue. Thus they who are Pagans, will, in the day of judgment, rise up against those false Christians, the ungrateful enemies of the grace of God, no less to their condemnation, than the queen of the South, to that of the unbelieving Jews.

WITSIUS.

The righteousness of our Sanctification, which I called a *righteousness imparted*, or a righteousness wrought by Christ in the believer, is a supernatural principle of a new life, planted in the heart of every child of God by the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, whereby they endeavour to approve themselves to God and man, in performing what the word of God requires to be performed to both. Briefly let us unfold what is rolled up in this description.

First, Here is the *efficient*, or workman, the Holy Spirit; hence it is the several parts of holiness are called *fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. v. 22; if the Spirit be not at the root, no such fruit can be seen on the branches as holiness; *sensual*, and *not having the Spirit*, are inseparably coupled, Jude 19. Man by his fall hath a double loss; God's love to him, his likeness to God.—Christ restores both to his children; the first by his righteousness imputed to them, the second by his Spirit re-imparting the lost image of God to them, which consists in righteousness and true holi-

ness. Who but a man can impart his own nature, and beget a child like himself? and who, but the Spirit of God, can make a creature like God, by making him partaker of the divine nature?

Secondly, Here is the work produced, *a supernatural principle of a new life*.

1. By a principle of life, I mean, an inward disposition and quality, sweetly, powerfully, and constantly inclining it to that which is holy; so that the Christian, though passive in the production, is afterward active, and co-working with the Spirit in all actions of holiness, not as a lifeless instrument is in the hand of a musician, but as a living child in the hand of a father; therefore they are said to be *led by the Spirit*, Rom. viii.

2. It is a principle of new life; the Spirit's work was not to chafe and recover what was swooning, but to work a life anew, in a soul quite dead; *you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses*. The devil comes as an *orator* to persuade by argument, when he tempts; the Spirit, as a *Creator*, when he converts. The devil draws forth and enkindles what he finds raked up in the heart before: but the Holy Spirit puts into the soul what he finds not there, called in Scripture the *seed of God*, 1 John iii. 9. *Christ formed in you*, Gal. iv. 19; *the new creature*, Gal. vi. 15; *the law put by God into the inner man*, Jer. xxxi. 33, which Paul calls *the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ*, Rom. viii. 2.

3. It is a supernatural principle by which we distinguish it from Adam's righteousness and holiness, which was con-natural to him, as now sin is to us; and, had he stood, would have been propagated to us, as naturally as now his sin is. Holiness was as natural to Adam's soul, as health was to his body, they both resulting from principles pure and right disposed.

GURNALL.

We must ascribe to grace alone, without any exception, the whole of the Sanctification to which we are called, and not a part of it only. We are equally beholden to grace for the beginning, progress, and end of our sanctification, and for its efficacy in enabling us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. When we set out in the way of salvation, it is grace that leads us into it; when we walk in it, it is grace which constrains us to do so; when

we run in it, it is grace which enables us to advance; when we persevere in it, it is grace that supports us; when we endure to the end, it is grace that conducts us to it. So that from the first step to the last, it is grace that directs and guides us to that which is good. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. If then we think, or say, or do any thing praiseworthy, it necessarily follows, that it is not of ourselves, but by the assistance and operation of grace.

Du Bosc.

Jesus Christ our Sanctification.

It is a dangerous mistake, which too many seem to fall into, that we are to depend upon Christ alone for justifying righteousness: but trust to our own active endeavours for inherent righteousness, for a victory over our corruptions, and for a conformity of heart and life unto the divine nature and will. Thence it is, that although they carry on a dreadful struggle with their corruptions, yet these, notwithstanding all their purposes, promises, vows, watchings, fastings, and other mechanical endeavours, will still prevail, and often throw them into great perplexity and confusion. They are sensible, that God demands their hearts, and that it is impossible their external reformatations should be acceptable, while their hearts are far from him, and led away with divers lusts. With what agony and toil do they therefore worry with their carnal and sensual affections, their impetuous appetites and passions; using various methods of mortification and discipline, to correct the disorders of their nature; and are but still rolling a stone upon the hill, which, as soon as they let go, it is at the bottom again! They are sensible that God requires sincerity in the inward man, in all the duties of religious worship. They therefore groan under the burden of their religious defects, their deadness, formality, and wandering thoughts in their approaches to God; condemn every duty they perform, and resolve upon more watchfulness and care for the future: but, alas! the difficulty remains; and they are ready to sink under discouraging apprehensions of their hypocrisy. Indeed, when they gain a little ground, their hopes are revived and their endeavours animated: but when deadness and corruption prevail, their distress and fear return and prevail

with them, their spirits sink, and they are ready to be quite discouraged. How many poor souls are thus labouring in the very fire, making a toilsome and melancholy drudgery of religion, by their legal attempts and their spirit of bondage!

I know by experience, that so far as this legal disposition prevails in us, it will not only darken our way, but check our progress in grace and holiness. If you would make any proficiency in your spiritual course, you ought to remember that the divine life must be carried on in your soul in the same manner, and by the same means, that it was begun there. We are not only justified by faith, but we must be sanctified by faith too; and of Christ's fulness must receive, even grace for grace. A cheerful dependence upon Christ for all supplies of grace and strength is the way to obtain his quickening, comforting, and strengthening influences: to have our hearts enlarged in the service of God, and to run the way of his commandments with delight. We must be dead to the law (to all dependence upon it and hope from it), if we would live unto God, Gal. ii. 13. Though we must discharge the duties of the law, and live in conformity to it; yet these must be done with a Gospel spirit, from Gospel principles and motives. *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* Would you then maintain a truly spiritual life, *the life which you live in the flesh must be by the faith of the Son of God*, Gal. ii. 20. Would you maintain a conversation worthy of your holy profession, *your good conversation must be in Christ*, 1 Pet. iii. 16. Would you live in the love of God and your neighbour, it is *faith which works by love*, Gal. v. 6. Would you get a victory over the world, and all its allurements, *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, 1 John v. 4. Would you be able to withstand temptations, it is *the shield of faith, by which you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked*, Eph. vi. 16. Would you walk honestly as in the day, you must *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. xiii. 13, 14. Would you be strengthened in the service of God against all opposition, you must *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. Would you have your heart purified from sinful lusts, appetites,

and passions, you must get *your heart purified by faith*, Acts xv. 9. Would you go on in your way rejoicing, *you must rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. iii. 3. Would you persevere in the fear and service of God, you must *be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. It is not your business to run without legs, or fly without wings, but to go *forth in the strength of the Lord*. Despair of all sufficiency of your own to mortify your corruptions, and quicken your soul in the ways of God and godliness. Humbly repair to the Lord Jesus Christ, and cheerfully trust in him for grace and strength, to make a successful progress in your spiritual course. Let not your imperfections or corruptions discourage you; nor let your good purposes or performances be the ground of your hopes; but in a diligent use of Gospel means, *commit your way to the Lord, trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass*. I think you cannot so far misunderstand me, as to suppose I am exhorting you to depend on Christ for holiness in the careless neglect of good works. This would be presumption, and not faith. No! I am exhorting you to a realizing impression, that your works will not sanctify your heart, your affections, or conversation; when you have done all you can, that you must rely wholly upon the Lord Jesus Christ; and that you may rely confidently upon him, to fulfil the good pleasure of his goodness in your soul; and carry you on from grace to grace, and from strength to strength, till you come to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

PRESIDENT DICKINSON.

Jesus Christ in believers is equally the Author and Principle of death and of life: *by him* they die unto sin, *by him* they live unto God. What the soul is to the body, that Jesus Christ is to believers: they live a spiritual life by him only. The divine and quickening power of his death and resurrection is the source of their new life. It is Christ who lives in them, who inspires, quickens, and governs them.

The Apostle said, that *Jesus Christ lived in him*, or, that he lived by Jesus Christ; and now he says, that he lives *by faith*; but all these expressions mean one and the same thing; for Christ is the Author of salvation and life to those only who

receive him by a true faith. He quickens and animates us only whilst he dwells in us; and he dwells in us by faith alone.

Whoever sincerely believes in Jesus Christ may say, *He gave himself for me*, Gal. ii. 20. *For me!* this is the language of faith, which applies to every Christian in particular the general promises of the Gospel; without which faith would have no solid foundation, and consequently no efficacy. But when we are fully convinced of this comfortable truth, we then feel ourselves drawn and attached entirely to Jesus Christ, and seek salvation and happiness in him alone; we then feel ourselves inflamed with love towards this merciful Saviour, who has loved us so much; and a sense of this necessarily produces spiritual life in us. OSTERWALD.

How can we form an idea of an intimate union with Jesus Christ without conceiving that he who is united to him partakes of his virtue? In uniting us to himself, he changes us; in justifying us, he sanctifies us. It is impossible to be *grafted* in the *tree of life* without partaking of its sap and its life. Whoever is in Christ necessarily feels his efficacy and his influence. When a river empties itself into the sea, it loses its own nature, and takes that of the ocean into which it falls. When man is united to his Saviour he ceases to be what he was, and takes the nature and qualities of his Saviour, on whose bosom he happily loses himself, and empties all his cares. *If any man be in Christ*, he must be conformable to his Lord; a living head is inconsistent with dead members; life expels death. SUPERVILLE.

The believer is a being of a singular nature. He lives, but has not in himself the source of his own life; it flows to him out of the fulness of another: *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*. He is righteous; but his righteousness is derived from another. He is acquitted; but another has made the payment. He is guilty; but another has borne the punishment. He is restored to the favor of God, and enjoys his peace; but by the merits of another. BENOIT.

As Christ is a Priest set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high, he preserves the stability of the better covenant, the new covenant, and perpetuates

the fruits of it; justification in blotting out the memory of our sins, and sanctification in writing the law in our hearts, Heb. viii. 1. 6. 10. 12. He is the Author of our first sanctification by his intercession, as the first-fruits of it was the sending that Spirit, by whose powerful operations the soul is reformed according to the divine image; and he is the Author of our repeated sanctification by the exercise of his advocacy. He is an Advocate in case of sin—in regard of the guilt, that it should not remain upon our persons; in regard of the power, that the contagion of it should not seize upon our vitals; in regard of the filth, that it might not remain, to unfit us for a fellowship with the Father and himself. His intercession in heaven is a continuation of that intercession on earth, whereby he testified his desire that we might be kept from the evil while we resided in an infectious world, *Keep them from the evil*, John xvii. 15; and *sanctified through his truth*, while we are upon an earth full of lying vanities, ver. 17. The end of his intercession is not for sharpness of wit, a pompous wealth, a luxurious prosperity, or a lazy peace; such things may be hurtful; but for faith, holiness, growth, wherein we can never be culpable. His intercession is not employed for low things, but for such as may fit us for an honor in another world. Mortification of sin, and holiness of conversation, are therefore called *things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God*, Col. iii. 1; compared with ver. 5, &c. things which come from above, by virtue of that session of Christ at the right hand of God, and the office he doth there exercise, which the Apostle explains to be a mortification of *our members which are upon the earth*, and since the great reason of his exaltation is his *hating iniquity* and *loving righteousness*, the end of his exaltation and of his intercession in that state is to manifest the same disposition, in the perfect expulsion of sin, and the full implantation of righteousness in us. The same dispositions which animated him to a dying on the cross here, do animate him to his intercession above, which is nothing else but a presenting his death, and a presenting not only his death, but all the motives which moved him to it, and the ends he aimed at in it: *He is manifested to take away sin*, 1 John iii. 5; manifested

in his humiliation on earth; manifested in his exaltation in heaven, to take away sin; sin in the pollution, as well as sin in the guilt. What he designed in the one, he designs in the other; the same end he aimed at in dying, he aims at in interceding. Since he is an Advocate in the virtue of his blood, he is an Advocate for the ends of his blood. He will not let sin continue in his members, which he came to wash off by his blood. As long as his love to righteousness and his aversion from sin continues in him, so long will he be acting in heaven, till he hath in the highest manner manifested to the full his affection to the one, and disaffection to the other, by utterly dispossessing out of the hearts of his people what he hates, both root and branch, and perfecting what he loves in all the dimensions of it. He doth not only sue out our pardon, but sue out a grant of those graces which are necessary preparatives and concomitants of pardon. The end of his intercession is no doubt the same with that of his exaltation, which is not only for *forgiveness of sin*, but *repentance*, Acts v. 31, which includes the whole sanctification. All the holiness believers have here is a fruit of this advocacy: the communication of that power which subdues corruption flows from it. Christ by his intercession receives all from his Father, that as a King he may convey all necessary supplies to us. But we must consider, that though Christ doth intercede for the sanctification of his people, yet it will not follow that any of them are at present perfect, and totally free from the relics of corruption. This is not intended by him in this life, any more than when he prayed for Peter: he desired not that he should be kept wholly from falling, but that his faith should be kept from totally failing. Sin is likewise suffered to continue in the best here, that men should not think that the acceptance of their persons doth arise from their own works and holiness, but from the sweet savour of the Mediator's sacrifice, continually presented in heaven. Yet perfection in grace will be the final issue of this advocacy. If grace should never be perfected, Christ would never be fully answered in his intercession, and so this office of his in heaven would want a manifestation of its true power and value.

CHARNOCK.

Sanctification the Effect of an Interest in Christ.

By virtue of an interest in Christ, the believer receives the Spirit of Christ for his sanctification : not indeed for his perfect sanctification, but for the perfecting of sanctification. Christ's righteousness is never applied imperfectly ; for to whomsoever it is imputed, it is made over wholly, and to all the intents and purposes it was wrought out, and brought in by Christ for. But the Spirit of Christ is imparted to believers, in measure, and in various degrees, as he seeth good : *Unto every one of us is grace given, according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. By this potent principle, the Spirit of Christ, sanctification is even, at first, universal in the whole man, and complete in parts : *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. He is a new man ; is born again ; hath a new nature, a new mind, a new understanding, a new conscience, a new heart and affections, and a new life. But though all be new in the believer, there is nothing in him that is perfectly new. He needs daily to pray, as Psal. li. 10, *Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me*. Yet, notwithstanding all the weakness of this new creature, the mixture and neighbourhood of the flesh, its contrary, and of all opposition it meets with from it, and of the low state it is oft brought into by the captivating power of sin ; yet doth the power of Christ's Spirit not only preserve the holy seed in the heart, but doth raise it up again, and will certainly perfect it. There was never a saving work of Christ wrought in the heart of a poor sinner that Christ ever left to be matter of triumph to the devil. Christ is a wise builder ; when he lays the foundation, he knows what the perfecting of it will cost him, is provided with it, and resolved to lay it out, and to finish his work : *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform (or finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ*, Phil. i. 6.

By virtue of this interest in Christ, believers have all Christ's fulness for their supply. He is *all in all* to them, Col. iii. 11. *It pleaseth the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. And surely this lodging of all fulness should

please, and doth highly please all believers : *And of (or out of) his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace*, John i. 16. *Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. Whence had Paul and John all their grace ? Out of Christ's fulness. Whence was it that they received so much grace beyond others ? It was *according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. But the stock and treasure is common to all believers. They are *partakers of Christ*, Heb. iii. 14, and *called to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*, 1 Cor. i. 9. The Apostle, in Col. ii. 8, 9, 10, giveth a needful warning, *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit*. But how shall we know and discern the snare ? It is *after the tradition of men, after the rudiments (or elements, or principles) of the world, and not after Christ*. His argument to enforce this warning is deep and strong ; verse 9, *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. It dwelleth really, substantially, in this one man, Jesus Christ. So that they do deceive you, that direct you to any for supply but to him. If ye would *be filled with all the fulness of God*, as Eph. iii. 19, you must seek it, and find it in him, *in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*. And this shall not be in vain : *And ye are complete in him*, verse 10. Never did, never could a believer use this fulness suitably to all its worth in itself, and to the gracious right he hath to use it.

But what is there in believers that Christ hath communion with ? All good is in him, and this is the believer's all ; and therefore it is easy to understand what their communion with Christ is, and what his communications to them are. He clothes and covers them with his righteousness, sanctifies them by his Spirit, and supplies them out of his fulness. But is there any thing in his people that Christ hath communion with ? I answer, Yes, there is ; and that is all in them, that either is consistent with their union with him, or that flows from that union. REV. R. TRAILL.

The Absolute Necessity of Grace.

ANOTHER branch of the doctrine of the Gospel, which many are prejudiced against, is, the doctrine of divine grace, as requisite to renew and purify our nature. Many

treat this doctrine as a chimera; and, which is not easy to account for, it meets with that treatment from some persons who profess some kind of religion. In the mean time, nothing is more plain than that denying the reality of grace is an undermining all true devotion. It destroys the use of prayer; for if there be no divine operation on the soul, to make men truly good and virtuous, what is it but a mocking of God, to apply to him for that end? Now this is contrary to the universal sense of mankind; not only Jews and Christians, but Mahometans, and Pagans themselves acknowledge that prayer and thanksgiving is a principal part of the service due by creatures to the Creator; that one of the chief things they should pray for, is good and virtuous inclinations, and a pure disposition of mind; that they who have attained to these excellent things should thank God for them; that is, acknowledge him as the source of them; whereas he who denies divine grace, in order to be consistent with himself, must maintain that a man must neither petition God to make him good and virtuous, nor thank him for his being so, that he should neither seek his assistance in order to perform duty, or in order to avoid sin.

It is objected against this doctrine, that it interferes with the liberty of a man's will; that a man is not free in doing good, or avoiding evil, if he be thus influenced to it by an external cause. But surely our fellow-creatures are external causes, as well as the Creator: men are free in doing good, though influenced by other men: why should the case alter about the more powerful influence of God? Besides, without any prejudice to free-will, men are (almost continually) passive in receiving impressions of bodily objects; why may it not be the same as to impressions of spiritual objects? Though men are passive in receiving impressions of visible things, yet they are free in their inclination to, or aversion from them, and in pursuing or avoiding them, and in all their actions relating to them. It is easy to apply this to spiritual impressions. Both flow from one cause: the Author of grace, and the Author of nature is one and the same: it is from God that men receive invisible light, and bodily strength; it is he that continues as well as gives them: men are passive in receiving both, yet free and active in making use of both: there is no

reason why spiritual light and spiritual strength may not be conceived as derived from God, and consistent with the liberty of man in the same manner.

There is a necessity for acknowledging a divine influence in giving and continuing the common exercise of reason, and soundness of mind: without that favorable influence, reason could not subsist. A few grains of matter misplaced in the brain are sufficient to make the greatest wisdom on earth sicken into raving and distraction. If liberty is not hindered by that influence that preserves the exercise of reason in general, why should it be thought to be hindered by that stronger influence that inclines and enables to the due exercise of reason about things invisible and eternal? To judge truly of the matter, it is certain the liberty of man is not hindered by the grace of God, but enlarged and perfected by it.

Sometimes the doctrine of grace is charged with *enthusiasm* by persons who, it would seem, do not know what *enthusiasm* is. It is indeed enthusiasm to pretend to grace for revelation of new doctrines: the grace offered in the Gospel is only in order to a right impression and improvement of the doctrines already revealed in the Scriptures. A man may be charged with enthusiasm when he pretends to be acted upon by divine grace, while he is really destitute of it. But to argue against the reality of grace, because there are some counterfeits of it, (as there are almost of all good things,) is a way of reasoning which no man will directly avow; and all ridicule founded on it (as there is a great deal that has no other foundation) should be looked on as weakness and extravagance.

It is no less unreasonable to charge this doctrine with favoring sloth and indolence; as if it encouraged men to neglect activity in duty, because they are passive in receiving grace. The Gospel teaches men to be active in seeking grace, and in using it. And it is plain that such powerful assistance is the greatest encouragement in the world to diligence and application. He that would effectually disprove the necessity of grace, must prove one of these two things, either that the ends for which grace is offered are useless; or that these ends may be obtained without grace: he that considers these two things will hardly undertake to prove either of them. A man

must have a very odd way of thinking that imagines the ends, for which grace is offered, are useless. How will a man pretend to prove, that it is no way requisite to the perfection and happiness of our souls, to be far more deeply affected with the eternal objects of faith, than with the short-lived objects of sense: to have the heart more enamoured with the infinitely amiable excellency of the Creator, than with any faint shadows to be found in the creatures: to have the affections more strongly bent on the enjoyment of the All-sufficient Source of good, that boundless ocean of blessedness and perfection, than on the enjoyment of empty fleeting vanities? not to insist on the other various ingredients of solid devotion, and of holiness, and integrity of heart and life. To disprove the use and necessity of these things, a man must prove that God is not the chief happiness of our souls; or that the enjoyment of God does not require the love of God, or his image, and conformity to him; or that holiness is not his image. As to the necessity of grace in order to holiness, let us but compare the disposition of mind just now mentioned with the temper of those that despise grace: the one is just the reverse of the other: it is true, they may know spiritual objects, they may hear, and read, and speak a great deal of them; for example, of God's infinite perfections: but then it is in such a manner, that their hearts are less affected with them oft-times, than with the most insignificant trifles: they themselves must confess it ought to be otherwise, and that their minds ought to be more deeply penetrated, and more strongly affected with these incomparable objects, than with any thing else in the world: and in effect, one would think it should be sufficient to convince men of the necessity of grace, to compare what they must acknowledge they *ought* to be with what they *are*: to compare that cold, jejune, lifeless frame, with which generally men think of the most excellent, and most important objects, with that vivacity of soul, that ardour of love, vehemence of desire, and these transports of joy with which it is reasonable such meditations should be accompanied.

On the other hand, experience shows that these persons, who have been reformed from a life of scandalous immorality or of stupid carelessness about eternity, to a life of strict integrity and serious devotion,

are persons whose constant practice it has been, since that happy change, to apply by prayer for divine grace: this may be said to be evident from experience, if mutual faith and trust be allowed among men, and the testimony of multitudes of the best in the world be reckoned an argument of any weight. Never any yet refuted them by contrary experiences; a devout man, praying for happiness without praying for holiness, is a character yet unheard of.

There have been many persons who, while they neglected the doctrine of grace, have spoke and wrote excellent things about virtue. There are such pretended reformers of mankind, perhaps, in all ages. The virtues they recommend are, many of them at least, the same with the duties the Gospel enjoins: so that these persons extol God's precepts, without acknowledging his grace, as if they could attain to his image without his assistance. And indeed many of them speak a thousand excellent things. But speaking and practising are two different things. Their practice is the reverse of their own precepts. Their conduct shows that their morality consists chiefly in fruitless speculations, and that their schemes are contrived and made use of for amusement, more than any thing else.

They may have the same effect with many other arts and sciences, to gratify men's curiosity and perhaps their vanity. But the art of making men truly virtuous and happy by their own skill and strength, is not yet invented. The results of all efforts that way is the exposing the weakness and vanity of the undertakers, and the confirmation of the truth of the Gospel, and the necessity of the grace offered in it. The more we consider the success of such reformers, the more we may be convinced that their systems are fitter for tickling the ear, than mending the heart. Human corruption proves always too hard for human eloquence; it is ever found to have strong enough footing in the heart to stand it out against all the golden sayings of the tongue. No doubt it is good to use all kind of helps against corruption, and to neglect no assistance against so dangerous an enemy: but to think these natural helps sufficient, without the assistance of grace; to pretend to bear down sin and vice merely by eloquence and philosophy; to jest it away merely by witty satire and lampoon; to convert men by

elegant phrases and delicate turns of the thought; is such a chimerical project, and which has so constantly failed in the experiment, that it is a wonder any body should seriously think it practicable. History sheweth the weak and contemptible efficacy of the sublimest philosophy of the heathens, when it encountered with inveterate corruptions, or violent temptations; how many of them that spake of virtue like angels, yet lived in a manner like brutes: whereas, in all ages, poor Christian plebeians, unpolished by learning, but earnest in prayer, and depending upon grace, have, in comparison of these others, lived rather like angels than men; and shown such an invincible steadfastness in the practice of virtue, as shameth all the philosophy in the world. Many of these ancient philosophers, who reasoned admirably in favor of virtue, and particularly of truth, honesty, and sincerity, are believed to have maintained one eternal Deity in private, and yet most disingenuously complied with the abominable idolatry of the multitude in public; while those who depended on the grace of Jesus Christ shewed an integrity in their zeal for the one true God, which death and tortures could not overcome; they forced their way through all the cruelties that malice could inflict, till they spread the knowledge of the true God and his laws through the known world: whereas, for all the speculations of the philosophers, the world might have been lying as it was to this day. REV. J. MACLAURIN.

God's Method of Imparting Grace.

It is very true, that all grace and goodness in the hearts of the saints is entirely from God; and they are universally and immediately dependent on him for it. But yet some persons are mistaken, as to the manner of God's communicating himself and his Holy Spirit, in imparting saving grace to the soul. He gives his Spirit to be united to the faculties of the soul, and to dwell there after the manner of a principle of nature; so that the soul, in being endued with grace, is endued with a new nature: but nature is an abiding thing. All the exercises of grace are entirely from Christ: but those exercises are not from Christ, as something that is alive moves and stirs something that is without life, and yet remains without life; but as having life communicated to it; so as through

Christ's power to have inherent in itself a vital nature. In the soul where Christ savingly is, there he lives. He does not only live without it, so as violently to actuate it, but he lives in it, so that that also is alive. Grace in the soul is as much from Christ, as the light in a glass, held out in the sun-beams, is from the sun. But this represents the manner of the communication of grace to the soul but in part; because the glass remains as it was, the nature of it not being at all changed; it is as much without any lightsomeness in its nature as ever. But the soul of a saint receives light from the Sun of righteousness, in such a manner, that its nature is changed, and it becomes properly a luminous thing; not only does the Sun shine in the saints, but they also become little suns, partaking of the nature of the Fountain of their light. In this respect, the manner of their derivation of light is like that of the lamps in the tabernacle, rather than that of a reflecting glass; which, though they were lit up by fire from heaven, yet thereby became themselves burning, shining things. The saints do not only *drink of the water of life*, that flows from the original fountain; but this water becomes a fountain of water in them, springing up there, and flowing out of them, John iv. 14, and vii. 38, 39. Grace is compared to a seed implanted, that not only is in the ground, but has hold of it, has root there, and grows there, and is an abiding principle of life and nature there.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

The Perpetuity of Grace.

He is our rock, and His work is perfect, Deut. xxxii. 4. He doth not begin a building, and then leave it off: none of his designs break in the middle, or fall short of their end. *He will perfect that good work which he hath begun, to the day of Jesus Christ*, Phil. i. 6. And how often is he called *the strength of those that trust in Him, their buckler, and His way perfect*, Ps. xviii. 30.

Hence is the stability of grace the perseverance of the saints; it is founded upon his unchangeableness. Not that they are unchangeable, though truly sanctified, if they and their graces were left to their own management: no, it is he who not only gives that rich portion to those he adopts to be his children, but keeps it for them, and them in the possession of it.

He maintains the lot of our inheritance, Psal. xvi. 5. And to build that persuasion of perseverance upon his truth and power engaged in it, is no presumption; yea, it is high dishonour to him to question it.

But when nature is set to judge of grace, it must speak according to itself, and therefore very unsuitably to that which it speaks of. Natural wits apprehend not the spiritual tenor of the covenant of grace, but model it to their own principles, and quite disguise it: they think of nothing but their resolves and moral purposes; or if they take up with some confused notion of grace, they imagine it put into their own hands, to keep or to lose it, and will not stoop to a continual dependence on the strength of another, rather choosing that game of hazard, though it is certain loss and undoing to do for themselves.

But the humble believer is otherwise taught; he *hath not so learned Christ*. He sees himself beset with enemies without, and buckled to a treacherous heart within, that will betray him to them; and he dares no more trust himself to himself, than to his most professed enemies. Thus it ought to be, and the more the heart is brought to this humble petitioning for that ability, and strengthening, and perfecting, from God, the more shall it find both stability, and peace from the assurance of that stability.

And certainly, the more the Christian is acquainted with himself, the more will he go out of himself for his perfecting and establishing. He finds that when he thinks to go forward, he is driven backward, and that sin gets hold of him, oftentimes when he thought to have smitten it. He finds that such is the miserable inconstancy of his heart in spiritual things, the vanishing of his purposes and breaking off of his thoughts, that they usually die ere they be brought forth: so that when he hath thought, I will pray more reverently, and set myself to behold God when I speak to him, and watch more over my heart, that it fly not out and leave me,—possibly the first time he sets to it, thinking to be master of his intention, he finds himself more scattered, and disordered, and dead, than at any time before. When he hath conceived thoughts of humility and self-abasement, and thinks, Now I am down, and laid low within myself, to rise and look big no more,—some vain fancy creeps in anon, and encourages him, and raises

him up to his old estate; so that in this plight, had he not higher strength to look at, he would sit down and give over all, as utterly hopeless of ever attaining to his journey's end.

But when he considers whose work that is within him, even these small beginnings of desires, he is encouraged by the greatness of the work, not to despise and despair of the small appearance of it in its beginning, *not to despise the day of small things*, Zech. iv. 10; and knowing that it is *not by any power, nor by might, but by His Spirit*, that it shall be accomplished, he lays hold on that word, *Though thy beginning be small, yet thy latter end shall greatly increase*, Job viii. 7.

The believer *looks to Jesus*, [ἀπορρυσ,] Heb. xii. 2—*looks off* from all oppositions and difficulties, *looks* above them to *Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; the Author*, and therefore *Finisher*. Thus, that royal dignity is interested in the maintenance and completion of what he hath wrought. Notwithstanding all thy imperfections, and the strength of sin, he can and will subdue it. Notwithstanding thy condition is so light and loose, that it were easy for any wind of temptation to blow thee away, yet he shall hold thee in his right hand, and there thou shalt be firm as the earth, that is so settled by his hand, that though it hangs on nothing, yet nothing can remove it. Though thou art weak, he is strong; and it is *he that strengthens thee, and renews thy strength*, Isa. xl. 28: when it seems to be gone and quite spent, he makes it fresh, and greater than ever before. The word here rendered *renew*, signifies *change*: they shall have for their own, his strength. A weak believer, and his strong Saviour, will be too hard for all that can rise against them. It is here fit, as in statues, *hominem cum basi metiri*, to measure the man with the basis on which he stands; and there is no taking the right measure of a Christian but in that way.

Thou art now, indeed, exposed to great storms and tempests, but he builds thee on himself, makes thee, by believing, to found on him; and so, though the winds blow and the rain fall, yet thou standest, being built on him thy Rock. And this, indeed, is our safety, the more we cleave to our Rock and fasten on him. This is the only thing that *establishes* us, and *perfects*, and *strengthens* us; therefore,

well is that word added, *θεμελιώσαι*, *found* you, or *settle* you, on your foundation. This is the firmness of the church against the gates of hell; He is a strong foundation for its establishment, and a living foundation, having influence into the building, for perfecting it; for it is a living house, and the foundation is a root sending life into the stones, so that they grow up, as this Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

It is the inactivity of faith on Jesus, that keeps us so imperfect, and wrestling still with our corruptions, without any advancement. We wrestle in our own strength too often, and so are justly, yea, necessarily foiled; it cannot be otherwise, till we make Him our strength. This we are still forgetting, and had need to be put in mind of, and ought frequently to remind ourselves. We would be at doing for ourselves, and insensibly fall into this folly, even after much smarting for it, if we be not watchful against it. There is this wretched natural independency in us, that is so hard to beat out. All our projectings are but castles in the air, imaginary buildings without a foundation, till once laid on Christ. But never shall we find heart-peace, sweet peace, and progress in holiness, till we be driven from it, to make Him all our strength; till we be brought to do nothing, to attempt nothing, to hope or expect nothing, but in Him; and then shall we indeed find his fulness and all-sufficiency, and *be more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us*.

LEIGHTON.

This divine agent, the Holy Spirit, *dwells* in all the faithful; he is given to them *to abide with them*: he consecrates them to himself, as his *habitation* and his *temple*: and he will maintain his residence, at least he will not finally relinquish it, though to express his displeasure he may depart for a season. He has undertaken the work of purification, and he will finish. This we conclude from the descriptions given of his offices, and of his own infinite perfections.

The spiritual life of believers, or their sanctification, is no other than an emanation from him. Will this sacred stream cease to flow? It is, as our Lord declares, *the well of water, which shall be in them; springing up into everlasting life*, John iv. 14. And any thing short of the final event will not fulfil the promise. It is *the unction*

of the Holy One, which *abideth in them*; and by which *they shall abide in Him*: and it is this principle which discriminates them from hypocrites and apostates. It is therefore called *the incorruptible seed, the seed of God, which remaineth in them*; so that their *leaf* and their *fruit* does not finally *wither*, nor do they *forsake their God as the wicked doth*, 1 John ii. 20. 27; iii. 9; Ps. i. 3. Take from them this security, and no strength or energies of their own will be sufficient to preserve them.

They view with thankfulness what God has done for them, and from the past they are taught to rest assured of the completion of their sanctification and of their felicity. *It is God*, they say, *who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, 2 Cor. i. 22. What do these expressions imply, but a certainty of the great event to the truly regenerate? Is the contract SEALED to them? Then there shall be a full performance. Have they received an EARNEST? This is a sacred pledge from him, who cannot fail in his engagements: it is a part of payment, and an infallible security, that in due season he will bestow the whole of the promised inheritance. They are therefore said to be *sealed*, not for a time only, but *unto the day of redemption*, Eph. iv. 30.

In like manner, they *have the first-fruits of the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 23. Now, first-fruits are the pledge and the commencement of harvest, valuable in themselves, but particularly precious as containing an assurance, that *the in-gathering* is approaching, and that the full produce shall soon be secured. Thus the graces of the Spirit, the holy principles, tempers, and habits, which he forms in believers, amount to a declaration, that *he will establish their hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints*, 1 Thess. iii. 13.

What an enlarged and exalted view of the great plan of divine mercy does this doctrine exhibit! The three Persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all united in the contrivance and execution! all engaged and pledged for the completion of the work in the final and everlasting salvation of all them that believe! Let us study the subject for the confirmation of our faith and hope, and for the increase of our joy and zeal. *Do*

not our hearts burn within us? O let us trust, and love, and praise, and wonder!
REV. T. ROBINSON.

Since we stand not, like Adam, upon our own bottom, but are branches of such a vine as never withers, members of such a head as never dies, sharers in such a Spirit as cleanseth, healeth, and purifieth the heart, partakers of such promises as are sealed with the oath of God;—since we live, not by our own life, but by the life of Christ; are not led or sealed by our own spirit, but by the Spirit of Christ; do not obtain mercy by our own prayers, but by the intercession of Christ; stand not reconciled to God by our own endeavours, but by the propitiation wrought by Christ, *who loved us when we were enemies and in our blood*; who is both willing and able to save us to the uttermost, and to preserve his own mercies in us; to whose office it belongs, to take order that none who are given unto him be lost;—undoubtedly, that life of Christ in us, which is thus underproped, though it be not privileged from temptations, no not from backslidings, yet is an *abiding* life. He who has raised our soul from death, will either preserve our feet from falling, or, if we do fall, will heal our backslidings, and will save us freely.

BP. REYNOLDS.

Some, perhaps, may be ready to object: ‘If the preservation of believers depend upon God, in the way and manner asserted, they have no occasion to be at all careful how they live. No great harm can befall them, for they will be sure to be safe in the end.’ In answer to which I shall only observe, that the strength of this objection was long since tried on our Lord himself by the devil. And as it appeared of no force to him, though the tempter proposed it as the necessary consequence of those promises made by the Father to Christ, as a man and mediator, respecting his preservation; so it appears to have as little in the present case. The grand proposition in the devil’s argument was, *If thou art the Son of God, his angels will certainly preserve thee; thou canst not be hurt*. And his conclusion was, therefore, *without any danger thou mayest cast thyself down from this eminence*, Matt. iv. 5, 6. So, in the present case, the argument contained in the objection is, if you be a

child of God, and in union with Christ, your perseverance is certain: for, being the charge of Omnipotence, it is impossible you should finally fall. Therefore, you may safely bid adieu to all circumspection; you need not fear sin, or its consequences; nor is there any occasion to be solicitous about walking with God in the ways of holiness. But, as our Lord, who had not the least doubt of the special care of his Father over him, as man, rejected Satan’s proposal with the utmost abhorrence; knowing that it was a temptation from beneath, and the argument used to enforce it, an abuse of the Scripture; so the believer, though he is fully persuaded that grace reigns in every part of his salvation, and though it strongly appears in that special care of God, which is incessantly exercised over him in his perseverance to eternal life, yet he is well aware, that he is not to continue in sin *that grace may abound*. On every such suggestion, therefore, he will from his heart say, *God forbid!* ABRAHAM BOOTH.

The Tendency of Grace to Holy Practice.

I, the Lord, change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, Mal. iii. 6. We, poor and weak men, change with every wind; strong to-day, and weak to-morrow; fixed and resolute to-day, shaken and staggering to-morrow; running forward to-day, and revolting as fast to-morrow; no hold to be taken of our promises, no trust to be given to our covenants; like Peter on the water, we walk one step, and we sink another. All our comfort is this—our strength and standing is not founded in ourselves, but in the rock whereon we are built, and in the power of God, by which we are kept through faith unto salvation, out of whose hands none are able to pluck us. Our very actions are wrought in us, and carried on unto their end by the power of Christ, who hath mercy, wisdom, and strength enough to rescue us, as from the power of hell and death, so from the danger of our own sickly and froward hearts. . . .

But some will then say, ‘Since we may be secure, if God’s grace and power alone be our strength, let us then commit ourselves and our salvation unto him, and, in the mean time, give over all thoughts and care of it ourselves, and live as we list; no act of ours can frustrate the counsel of the love of God.’ To this we answer with

the Apostle, *God forbid*. Though the enemies of free grace do thus argue, yet they who indeed have the grace of God in their hearts, have better learned Christ. For it is against the formal nature of the grace and Spirit of Christ to suffer those in whom it dwelleth, to give over themselves unto security and neglect of God: for grace is a vital and active principle; and doth so work in us, as that it doth withal dispose and direct us unto working too. The property of grace is to fight against and to kill sin, as being most extremely contrary unto it: and therefore it is a most irrational way of arguing, to argue from the being of grace to the life of sin. *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* Rom. vi. 2. If we be dead to sin, this is argument enough, in the Apostle's judgment, why we should *set our affections on things above*, Col. iii. 2, 3. The grace of God doth not only serve to bring salvation, but to *teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*, Tit. ii. 11, 12. He who hath decreed salvation as the end, hath decreed also the antecedent means unto that end to be used, in manner suitable to the condition of reasonable and voluntary agents, unto whom it belongs, having their minds by grace enlightened, and their wills by grace prevented, to co-operate with the same grace in the further pursuance of their salvation. And if at any time corruption should, in God's children, abuse his grace and efficacy unto such presumptuous resolutions, they would quickly rue so unreasonable and carnal a way of arguing, by the woful sense of God's displeasure in withdrawing the comforts of his grace from them, which would make them ever after take heed how they turned the grace of God into wantonness any more. Certainly, the more the servants of God are assured of his assistance, the more careful they are in using it unto his own service. Who more sure of the grace of God than the Apostle Paul, who gloried of it as that that made him what he was? *By the grace of God, I am that I am*; who knew that God's grace was sufficient for him, and that nothing could separate him from the love of Christ; who knew whom he had believed, and that the grace of the Lord was exceeding abundant towards him; and yet who more tender and fearful

of sin? who more set against corruption, more abundant in duty, more pressing unto perfection, than he? This is the nature of grace, to animate and actuate the faculties of the soul in God's service, to ratify our covenants, and to enable us to perform them. **BR. REYNOLDS.**

The tendency of grace in the heart to holy practice is very direct, and the connexion most natural, close, and necessary. True grace is not an unactive thing; there is nothing in heaven or earth of a more active nature; for it is life itself, and the most active kind of life, even spiritual and divine life. It is no barren thing; there is nothing in the universe that in its nature has a greater tendency to fruit. Godliness in the heart has a direct relation to practice, as a fountain has to a stream, or as the luminous nature of the sun has to beams sent forth, or as life has to breathing, or the beating of the pulse, or any other vital act; or as a habit or principle of action has to action; for it is the very nature and notion of grace, that is a principle of holy action or practice. Regeneration, which is that work of God in which grace is infused, has a direct relation to practice; for it is the very end of it, with a view to which the whole work is wrought: all is calculated and framed, in this mighty and manifold change wrought in the soul, so as directly to tend to this end; *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, Ephes. ii. 10. Yea, it is the very end of the redemption of Christ; *who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Titus ii. 14. *He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again*, 2 Cor. v. 15. *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix. 14. *And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unrepreevable in his sight*, Col. i. 21, 22. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation*, 1 Peter i. 18:

That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life, Luke i. 74, 75. God often speaks of holy practice, as the end of that great typical redemption, the redemption from Egyptian bondage; as *Let my song go, that he may serve me,* Exod. iv. 3. So chap. iv. 23; vii. 16; viii. 1. 20; ix. 1. 13; and x. 3. And this is also declared to be the end of election: *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain,* John xv. 16. *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love,* Eph. i. 4. *Created unto good works, which God hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them,* Eph. ii. 10. Holy practice is as much the end of all that God does about his saints, as fruit is the end of all the husbandman does about the growth of his field or vineyard, as the matter is often represented in Scripture: Matt. iii. 10; xiii. 8. 23-30. 38; xxi. 19. 33, 34. Luke xiii. 6. John xv. 1, 2. 4-6. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Heb. vi. 7, 8. Isa. v. 1-8. Cant. viii. 11, 12. Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. And therefore every thing in a true Christian is calculated to reach this end. This fruit of holy practice, is what every grace, and every discovery, and every individual thing, which belongs to Christian experience, has a direct tendency to.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

Difference between quickening and restraining Grace.

SANCTIFYING grace keeps the soul from sin, by destroying it; but restraining grace keeps the soul from sin, only by imprisoning it.

There may appear but little difference betwixt the conversation of a child of God, whom special grace doth sanctify; and one in a state of nature, whom common grace doth only restrain. Doth the one walk blamelessly without offence? doth he avoid the grosser pollutions of the world? so doth the other. A star is not more like a star than these meteors may be like them.

Sanctifying grace strikes especially at the sins of the heart; but restraining grace, usually, only hinders the sins of the life.

Restraining grace watches without; but true grace dwells within: and, as Christ speaks of the church of Pergamos, it dwells there, *where Satan's seat is.* It rules in the midst of its enemies; and it is engaged so to do for its own security, that it may still crush them as they arise in the heart.

True grace, when it beats back sin, follows it and pursues it into the heart, and there searches for it: and if it sees it but breathe in a thought, or stir in a desire, presently it falls upon it and destroys it.

Sanctifying grace, when it keeps a soul from sin, always engages the will against it; but common and restraining grace only awakens and rouses the conscience against it.

The will and conscience are two leading faculties of the soul; the one commands what shall be done, and the other informs what ought to be done. And all the rest of the faculties and affections of the soul take part and side with these two. In a godly man these two are at an agreement. What conscience prompts, the will commands, and the inferior faculties are all ready to execute.

Where restraining grace only resists and hinders sin, it doth it by setting one faculty and affection of the soul against another; but, where sanctifying grace hinders it, it sets the same faculty and affection of the soul against itself. Restraining grace sets one affection against another: conscience against will; the fear of hell against the love of sin; hellish terrors against sinful pleasures; God's threatenings against the devil's flatteries. But when sanctifying grace opposes and hinders sin, it sets the same faculty and affection of the soul against itself; will against will; love against love; desire against desire. He wills the commission of sin, it is true; but yet, at the same time, he wills the mortification of it. He loves to gratify his sin; but yet, at the same time, he wills the crossing of it too. He desires to enjoy that pleasure and contentment that he fancies he may take in sin, and yet he desires, at the same time, to destroy it. Here is one and the same faculty against itself: and the reason of this is, because a child of God hath two principles in every single faculty. There is in him a mixture of flesh and spirit; a carnal part that sides with sin, and a spiritual part that always contradicts and opposes it: and these two are spread over

his whole soul, and are mingled with every power and faculty thereof; so that he can neither do the evil nor the good that he would do, without contradiction, strife, and reluctance. Now try yourselves by this, when you are tempted to sin; what is it that resists it? is it your will, or is it only your conscience? are you only frightened from it? doth the fear of hell overcome the love of sin? All this may be from a mere restraint in those who altogether are unacquainted with the power of sanctifying grace. This is the symptom and character of a gracious soul, that, when it is most inclinable unto sin, yet, at the same time, it is most averse from it. When it most wisheth the accomplishment of sin, yet, even then, it strongly wisheth the subduing and mortifying of that sin. I know that this appears a riddle and a strange paradox to wicked men; but those, who have any true sense of the work of grace upon their own hearts, know it to be a truth, and rejoice in the experience that they have of it.

Restraining and sanctifying grace differ in the motives and arguments that they make use of for the resisting of sin.

There are two general topics or common-places whence all arguments against sin are drawn, and those are the Law and the Gospel. Both of these administer such weapons, as, if rightly used, are very effectual for the beating down of sin. And, commonly, restraining grace useth those only that are borrowed from the law. It urges the command; it thunders the curse; it brandishes the sword of justice; and makes reports of nothing but hell and eternal damnation, and such like arguments, that scare men from the committing of their sins, though still they love them. Now sanctifying grace, though it also makes a most profitable use of these very arguments, yet it chiefly useth more mild and more ingenuous motives, drawn from the love of God, from the death of Christ, from the comforts of the Holy Ghost; and these, though they strike softer, yet wound deeper.

BR. HOPKINS.

Difference between Grace and Gifts.

It is not gifts, but grace, which makes a Christian: For,—

1. Gifts are from a common work of the Spirit. Now a man may partake of all the common gifts of the Spirit, and yet

be a reprobate; for therefore they are called common, because they are indifferently dispensed by the Spirit to good and bad; to them that are believers, and to them that are not.

They that have grace, have gifts; and they that have no grace, may have the same gifts; for the Spirit works in both: nay, in this sense, he that hath no grace, may be under a greater work of the Spirit (*quoad hoc*) as to this thing, than he that hath most grace: a graceless professor may have greater gifts than the most holy believer: he may out-pray, and out-preach, and out-do them; but they in sincerity and integrity out-go him.

2. Gifts are for the use and good of others; they are given in *ordinandum alium*, as the schoolmen speak, for the profiting and edifying of others; so says the Apostle, *they are given to profit withal*, 1 Cor. xii. 7. Eph. iv. 12.

Now, a man may edify another by his gifts, and yet be unedified himself; he may be profitable to another, and yet unprofitable to himself. . . .

3. It is beyond the power of the greatest gifts to change the heart; a man may preach like an apostle, pray like an angel, and yet may have the heart of a devil. It is grace only that can change the heart; the greatest gifts cannot change it, but the least grace can; gifts may make a man a scholar, but grace makes a man a believer.

Now if gifts cannot change the heart, then a man may have the greatest gifts, and yet be but almost a Christian.

4. Many have gone laden with gifts to hell: no doubt Judas had great gifts; for he was a preacher of the Gospel; and our Lord Jesus Christ would not set him to work, and not fit him for the work; yet 'Judas has gone to his own place:' the Scribes and Pharisees were men of great gifts, and yet, 'Where is the wise? where is the scribe?'

The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; 1 Cor. i. 18-20. *Them that perish*, who are they? Who! the wise and the learned, both among Jews and Greeks; these are called them that perish. A great bishop said, when he saw a poor shepherd weeping over a toad: 'The poor illiterate world attain to heaven, while we with all our learning fall into hell.'

There are three things must be done for us, if ever we would avoid perishing.

We must be thoroughly convinced of sin.

We must be really united to Christ.

We must be instated in the Covenant of Grace.

Now the greatest gifts cannot stead us in any one of these.

They cannot work thorough convictions.

They cannot effect our union.

They cannot bring us into covenant-relation.

And, consequently, they cannot preserve from eternal perishing; and if so, then a man may have the greatest gifts, John iv. 14. and yet be but almost a Christian.

5. Gifts may decay and perish: they do not lie beyond the reach of corruption; indeed grace shall never perish, but gifts will; grace is incorruptible, though gifts are not; grace is a *spring, whose waters fail not*, Isa. lviii. 11.; but the streams of gifts may be dried up. If grace be corruptible in its own nature, as being but a creature; yet it is incorruptible in regard of its conservor, as being the new creature; *he that did create it in us, will conserve it in us; he that did begin it, will also finish it*, Heb. xii. 2.

Gifts have their root in nature, but grace hath its roots in Christ; and, therefore, though gifts may die and wither, yet grace shall abide for ever.

Now if gifts are perishing, then, though he that hath the least grace is a Christian, he that hath the greatest gifts may be but almost a Christian.

MATT. MEAD.

Reasons for the Necessity of Good Works.

OUT of that which hath been spoken, three reasons may be gathered for the necessity of good works.

First, it is the end of our faith and justification by Christ, yea the end why he shed his blood for us, that we being reconciled to God in him, might bring forth fruits of righteousness, which else we could never have done. This is no speculation, but plain Scripture. St. Peter, 1 Ep. ii. 24, telleth us, that *Christ his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness*. St. Paul, Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. *The grace of God, saith he, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men; (wherefore?) teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly*

lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These words contain the sum of all I have hitherto told you;—that Christ is therefore given us to be a propitiation for our sins, and to justify us, that in him we might walk before God in newness of life; so to obtain a crown of righteousness in the world to come.

Answerable is that place, Eph. ii. 10, where the Apostle having told us, ver. 8, 9, *we are saved by grace, through faith, and not of works, lest any man should boast*; he adds presently, (lest his meaning might be mistaken, as it is of too many,) that *we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*: as if he should say, those works of obedience ordained by God aforetime in his law for us to walk in, which we could not perform of ourselves, now God hath as it were new moulded us in Jesus Christ, that we might perform them in him; namely, by way of acceptance, though they come short of that exactness the law requireth. And thus to be saved is to be saved by grace and favour, and not by the merit of works; because the foundation whereby ourselves and our services are approved in the eyes of God, and *acquitted of guilt*, (which the Scripture calleth to be *justified*,) is the mere favour of God in Jesus Christ, and not any thing in us. And this way of salvation excludes all boasting: for what have we to boast of, when all the righteousness of our works is none of ours, but Christ's imputed to us; whereby only, and not for any merit in themselves, they become acceptable and have promise of reward? But that men should be saved by Christ, though they be idle and do nothing, I know no such grace of God revealed in Scripture.

Now that in Christ we may perform works of righteousness which God will accept and crown, is plain by the tenor of Scripture. St. Paul desires that the *Philippians might be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God*, Phil. i. 11. And the same Apostle tells the Romans, *That being made free from sin, and become*

servants to God, they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. vi. 22; that is, as the Syriac turns it, they have holy fruits, whose end is life eternal.

And if we would seriously consider it, we should find, that the more we believe this righteousness of faith in Christ, the more reason we have to perform works of service and obedience unto God, than if we believed it not. For if our works would not be acceptable with God unless they were complete in every point as the law required; if there were no reward to be looked for at the hands of God unless we could merit it by the worthiness of our deeds; who that considers his own weakness and insufficiency would not sooner despair, than go about to please God by works? He would think it better to do nothing at all, than to endeavour what he could never hope to attain, and so lose his labour. But we, who believe that those who serve God in Christ have their failings and wants covered with his righteousness, and so their works accepted as if they were in every point as they should be; why should not we of all men fall to work, being sure by Christ's means and merit we shall not lose our labour?

A second motive why we should do good works is, because they are the way and means ordained by God to obtain the reward of eternal life, without which we shall never attain it. *Without holiness no man shall see God, Heb. xii. 14. Look to yourselves, saith St. John, Ep. ii. ver. 8., that ye lose not those things ye have wrought, but that ye may receive a full reward.* The angel's message from heaven to devout Cornelius was, *Thy prayers and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God: whereupon St. Peter inferred, That in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him, Acts x. 4. 35.*

Hence it is that we shall be judged and receive sentence at the last day according to our works. *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. For inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me, Matt. xxv. 34, &c.*

Lord, how do those look to be saved at that day, who think good works not required to salvation, and accordingly do them not! Can our Saviour pass this blessed sentence on them? think they he can? If he should, they might truly say indeed, 'Lord, we have done no such matter, nor did we think ourselves bound unto it; we relied wholly upon our faith in thy merits, and thought we had been freed from such services.' What? do they think Christ will change the form of his sentence at that great day? No certainly: if the sentence for bliss will not fit them, and be truly said of them; the other will, and must, for there is no more; *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: For when I was hungry, ye gave me no meat, &c. ver. 41.* This must be their doom, unless they suppose the righteous Judge will lie for them.

And it is here further to be observed, that *the works* named in this sentence of judgment are works of the second Table, and *works of mercy and charity*; feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick; all alms-deeds, which men are now-a-days so much afraid of, as if they looked toward popery, and had a tang of meriting; for now-a-days these costly works of all others are most suspicious. But will it be so at the day of judgment? True it is, they *merit* not the reward which shall be given them: but what then? are we so proud we will do no works unless we may *merit*? Is it not sufficient that God will reward them for Christ's sake, though they have no worth in themselves? And thus much of the second motive why we should do good works,—Because howsoever they *merit* nothing, yet are they the means and way ordained by God to attain the reward of eternal life.

The third and last motive to works of righteousness is,—Because they are the only sign and note whereby we know our faith is true and saving, and not counterfeit. For, *if we say we have fellowship with Christ, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth, 1 John i. 6. Hereby we know that we know him (viz. to be our advocate with his Father, and the propitiation for our sins), if we keep his commandments, chap. ii. 3. Little children, let no man deceive you: He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as Christ is righteous, chap. iii. 7. The same al-*

most you may find again, chap. ii. 29. For if every one that believeth in Christ truly and savingly believes that salvation is to be attained by obedience to God in him, and not otherwise, and therefore embraceth and layeth hold upon him for that end; how can such a one's faith be fruitless? How can he be without works, who therefore lays hold on Christ that his works and obedience may be accepted as righteous before God for his sake, and so be rewardable? It is as possible for the sun to be without his light, or the fire to want heat, as such a faith to be without works.

Our Saviour therefore himself makes this a most sure and never-failing note to build our assurance of salvation upon, Luke ch. vi. where the mention of the words of my text gives the occasion, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, saith he, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock: but he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great,* ver. 46—49. Whom these three motives or reasons will not persuade to good works, let not my soul, O Lord, be joined with theirs, nor my doom be as theirs must be.

Jos. MEDE.

The Scripture is more diligent and more ample in teaching the Christian justified man obedience unto God and a virtuous life, than it is to shew us our salvation in Christ; and that is for this purpose only, that we should not by our licentious liberty receive the grace of God in vain. It is more easy for man to know the Gospel, than to follow the life of the Gospel. Another man may preach Christ, but the hearer must follow Christ. The science of the Scripture is practical and not speculative; it requireth a doer and not a speaker only. There be many that dissemble faith, and have a certain show of religion, when indeed in the inward man there is no faith at all. Let every man therefore search his own conscience, with

what faith he is endued, and remember that Christ said, *It is a strait way and narrow that leadeth to life, and but a few that walk therein,* Matt. vii. Therefore our only remedy is to pray for grace, and amend. Bp. HOOPER, (MARTYR.)

Now, are we come to the fourth error, where Rastall untruly reporteth on me, that I would persuade the people that good works done by any man in this world are nothing available unto him that doth them, and that it is no hurt nor hindrance unto any man, though he never do any. Because, I say, they justify not before God, therefore he thinketh, that other men would understand me as wisely as he doth, and argue that they are nothing available; but I must desire him to put on his spectacles and look again upon my book, and he shall find these words: *'Peradventure, thou wilt answer unto me, Shall I then do no good deeds? I answer, Yes: thou wilt answer me, Wherefore? I answer, Thou must do them because God hath commanded them. I answer, Thou art living in this world with men, and hast conversation with them, therefore hath God appointed thee what thou shalt do to the profit of thy neighbour and taming of thy flesh, as Paul testifieth: We are his work in Christ Jesu, unto good works, which works God hath prepared that we should walk in them,* Eph. ii. These works God would have us do, that the unfaithful might see the godly and virtuous conversation of his faithful, and thereby be compelled to *glorify our Father which is in heaven,* Matt. v. and so are they both profitable unto thy neighbour, and also a testimony unto thee, by the which a man may know that thou art the right son of thy heavenly Father, and a very Christ unto thy neighbour: and after teacheth that we ought to do these works without having respect either to heaven or hell, but attending through charity the wealth of our neighbour &c.'

I wonder that Rastall is not ashamed to say that I would make them believe that they are not available; therefore, good reader, note my words: first, I say, we must do them, because God hath commanded them: is it not available to keep the commandments of God? Secondly, I say, that they are to the profit of thy neighbour: is it not available? Thirdly, I say, that they tame our flesh: is it not avail-

able? Fourthly, I say, they are the glory of God: is it not available? Fifthly, I say, they are a testimony to him that doth them, by the which men may know that he is the very son of God: is that not available? Belike, Rastall counteth nothing available, but that which justifieth before God; he will say the sun is not available, because it justifieth not, fire is not available in his eyes, because it justifieth not, &c.

JOHN FRITH, (MARTYR.)

No one can be more firmly convinced than I am, that it is impossible to insist with too much urgency, upon the indispensable necessity of good works, provided they occupy their proper relative position, and their necessity be placed on its legitimate foundation. With reference to God, they are commanded by him; and this constitutes a formal obligation on his creatures; *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* With reference to society, they are eminently conducive to its welfare, and may lead others to seek that grace from which they proceed; for we are enjoined to *let our light so shine before men, that they may by our good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.* With reference to the person who performs them, they are of essential importance, as fruits of faith, and evidences of his having an interest in the propitiation which the Lord Jesus Christ made for the sins of the world; for *hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.* But this is not all: they are of importance to the individual, not only as evidences of his title to the future inheritance, but also as a test and criterion of his real state and character, and consequently, as evidences of his qualification for the future felicity. Where the internal tastes, dispositions, and habits, do not harmonise with the objects which will be presented to the disembodied spirit, when it enters upon a new state of existence, they render it morally incapable of deriving happiness from them.* If, therefore, the enjoyments

of the heavenly state be of a holy and spiritual nature, and if man, in consequence of his original corruption, be by nature destitute of any relish for such enjoyments, then, before he can be qualified for them, he must be sanctified, as well as justified—he must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, as well as have his sins remitted. But what are the proofs of this internal change? They are not only to be discovered by a reflex operation of the mind upon itself, but are likewise to be sought in the external conduct which ought to be characterised by an habitual conformity to the Divine will.

Good works, moreover, are of importance in another point of view, and that is because they tend to confirm and establish the motives from which they derive their existence. As it is the property of habits to produce acts, so, reciprocally, acts have a necessary tendency to invigorate habits. Every act of unbelief, of vindictiveness, of self-indulgence, on the one hand, strengthens the habit from which it originates; and, on the other, every exercise of faith, of love, of self-denial, produces a corresponding effect. The moral dispensations of the Deity are found, in this respect also, to be in unison with the fundamental principles of the human mind, when it is expressly declared, that *whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.*

Good works, lastly, are of immense importance, considered with reference to the gradation of future rewards. Justification admits of no degrees; for a man either is, or is not, absolutely pardoned. But there are degrees in sanctification; and, consequently, there must be degrees in the qualification for future happiness. Since good works also, which are the fruits of faith, are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and, according to his gracious promise, are the subjects of reward, those who have abounded most in

fore, as well as from Revelation, it may be inferred, that whatever has been the prevailing bent of the soul during its sojourn in the body, the same bent will be retained after it is removed to a new scene of existence. There is, consequently, sound philosophy in the remarks of Virgil, when he observes with regard to the shades of the heroes, whom Æneas saw when traversing the infernal regions,

Quæ gratia currum,

Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos; eandem sequitur tellure repositum.

Æn. lib. vi. l. 653.

* Arguing upon principles of natural reason, Bishop Butler has justly observed, that "there is in every case a probability, that all things will continue as we experience they are, in all respects, except those in which we have some reason to think they will be altered." Upon these principles, there-

them are authorised by Scripture to anticipate the most abundant recompense. If he who improved the one pound which was deposited in his hands, by gaining ten more, was made ruler over ten cities; whilst he who added only five to his original stock, was placed over five cities: and if, further, the degrees of glory in a future state be compared to the different degrees of splendour inherent in the heavenly luminaries; then a most powerful motive is furnished to stimulate the Christian to excel in the practice of every virtue, and to inspire him with a laudable ambition of glorifying his heavenly Father by bringing forth much fruit.

In conclusion, I would observe, that Christianity is eminently a religion of motives, and that a true and lively faith in its essential doctrines, will give birth to motives, which, upon the soundest metaphysical principles, must necessarily influence the practice.* The facts which it discloses, the doctrines which it reveals, and the truths which it promulgates, are invested by faith with such a reality and substance as will produce, in all cases where faith is equally vigorous and lively, effects similar to those enumerated by St. Paul in the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews.

The efficacy of a justifying faith is chiefly evinced in producing love—love to God and man. In this comprehensive principle is included, according to the tenor of our blessed Saviour's declaration, all that is written in the law or taught by the prophets. When, therefore, the existence of this principle is attested by works of piety towards God and benevolence towards man, the person in whom it dwells must previously have been

brought into a state of favour and reconciliation, and must, while he continues under its prevailing influence, be prepared for admission into the heavenly inheritance; where faith, having fulfilled its destined purpose, will be superseded by sight; where hope, having attained its wished-for object, will be changed into fruition; and where charity alone will remain the eternal inmate of the soul.

ARCHDEACON BROWNE.

How good Works are to be performed.

FIRST, we must do them out of faith in Christ, that is, relying upon him only for the acceptance and rewarding of them: for in him alone God is well pleased with us, and with what we do, and, therefore, *without faith*, and reliance upon him, *it is impossible to please God*. We must not think there is any worth in our works, for which any such reward as God hath promised, is due; for, alas! our best works are full of imperfections, and far short of what the law requires. Our reward, therefore, is not of merit, but out of the merciful promise of God, in Christ; which the apostle means, when he says, *we are saved by grace, and not by works*; that is, it is the grace and favour of God, in Christ, which makes ourselves acceptable, and our works rewardable, and not any desert in them, or us.

Having laid this foundation, the next thing required is *sincerity of heart* in doing them. We must do them out of the fear of God, and conscience of his commandments, not out of respect of profit, or fear, or praise of men, for such as do so are hypocrites. *Not every one*, saith our Saviour, *that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of my Father*; now it is the will of our heavenly Father, that we serve him in truth and uprightness of heart: *I know*, saith David, 1 Chron. xxix. 17, *that thou my God triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness*. And so he said to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1, *I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou upright*, or, be thou sincere. This manner of serving God, Joshua commended to the Israelites, *Fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth*, Josh. xxiv. 14.; and the prophet Samuel, *Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart*, 1 Sam. xii. 24. This sincerity, uprightness, and truth in God's service, is, when we do religious and pious duties, and abstain from the contrary, out

* That faith and practice are separable things, is a gross mistake, or rather a manifest contradiction. Practical holiness is the end, faith is the means; and to suppose faith and practice separable, is to suppose the end attainable without the use of means. The direct contrary is the truth. The practice of religion will always thrive in proportion as its doctrines are generally understood and firmly received; and the practice will degenerate and decay in proportion as the doctrine is misunderstood and neglected. It is true, therefore, that it is the great duty of a preacher of the Gospel to press the practice of its precepts upon the consciences of men. But then it is equally true, that it is his duty to enforce this practice in a particular way, namely, by inculcating its doctrines. The motives which the revealed doctrines furnish are the only motives he has to do with, and the only motives by which religious duty can be effectually enforced.—*Bishop Horsley's Charges*, p. 10.

of conscience to Godward, out of an heart possessed with the love and fear of God. It is otherwise called in Scripture, *perfectness*, or *perfectness of heart*; for it is a lame and imperfect service, where the better half is wanting, as the heart is, in every work of duty both to God and men. And therefore it is called *perfectness* when both go together, when conscience, as the soul, enlivens the outward work as a body. And, indeed, this is all the perfection we can attain unto in this life, 'to serve God in truth of heart,' though otherwise we come short of what we should; and, therefore, God esteems our actions and works, not according to the greatness or exactness of the performance, but according to the sincerity and truth of our hearts in doing them: as appears by the places I have already quoted, and by that where it is said, that though Asa failed in his reformation, and the *high places were not taken down; nevertheless, his heart was perfect with the Lord his God, all his days*, 1 Kings xv. 14.

A note to know such a sincerity and truth of heart by is, If in our privacy, when there is no witness but God and ourselves, we are careful then to abstain from sin, as well as in the sight of men: If when nobody but God shall see and know it, we are willing to do a good work, as well as if all the world should know it. He that findeth himself thus affected, his heart is true, at least in some measure; but so much the less, by how much he findeth himself the less affected in this manner. When we are in the presence and view of men, we may soon be deceived in ourselves, and think we do that out of conscience and fear of God, which indeed is but for the fear or praise of men, either lest we should be damnified, or impair our credit, or the like. But when there is none but God and us, then to be afraid of sin and careful of good duties, is a sign we fear God in truth and sincerity, and not in hypocrisy.

The special and principal means to attain this sincerity and truth of heart is, To possess ourselves always with the apprehension of God's presence, and to walk before him as in his eye. Where-soever thou art, there is an eye that sees thee, an ear that hears thee, and a hand that registereth thy most secret thoughts: *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*, Prov. v. 21. How much ashamed

would we be, that men should know how much our hearts and our words and actions disagreed? How would we blush that men should see us commit this or that sin, or neglect this or that duty? What horrible atheism then doth this argue, that the presence of man, yea sometimes of a little child, should hinder us from that wickedness which God's presence cannot? This having of God before our eyes, and the continual meditation of his all-seeing presence, would, together with devout prayer for the assistance of God's grace, be in time the bane of hypocrisy and falsehood of heart, and beget instead thereof that truth and sincerity which God loveth.

Another property of such obedience as God requires is universality: we must not serve God by halves, by doing some duties and omitting others; but we must, with *David, have respect to all God's commandments*, Psal. cxix. 6, 20; to those of the second table as well as to those of the first, and to those of the first as well as those of the second. The want of which universality of obedience to both tables is so frequent, as the greatest part of Christians are plunged therein, to the undoubted ruin of their souls and shipwreck of everlasting life, if they so continue.

JOSEPH MEDE.

What it is that constitutes a good Work.

It may be of use to consider, what is essentially necessary to a good work. To constitute a good work, or one that is acceptable to God, it must be done from a right principle, performed by a right rule, and directed to a right end. It must be done from a right principle. This is the love of God. The great command of the unchangeable law is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*. Whatever work is done from any other principle, however it may be applauded by men, it is not acceptable in the sight of him who searches the heart. For *by him* principles, as well as *actions*, are weighed, 1 Sam. ii. 3. It must be performed by a right rule. This is the revealed will of God. His will is the rule of righteousness. The moral law in particular, is the rule of our obedience. It is a complete system of duty, and, considered as moral, is immutably the rule of our conduct. However chargeable, therefore, any work may be to him that performs it, or however diligent he may be in the performance of it, yet, if it be no where commanded by the authority of heaven, it

stands condemned by that divine query, *Who hath required this at your hands?* And though it be pretended, that the love of God is the *principle*, and the glory of God the *end*, as the dupes of superstition, both ancient and modern, have generally done; yet, being no where enjoined in our only rule of faith and practice, it is no better than reprobate silver, and will certainly be rejected of God, Jer. vi. 30. So that, however highly the performer may please himself, or gratify his own pride by the deed, he cannot be commended for his obedience. For where there is no command, explicit or implied, there can be no obedience; consequently, no good work. It must be directed to a right end. This is the glory of the supreme Being; *whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*, is the peremptory command of the Most High, 1 Cor. x. 31. And as this is the end for which Jehovah himself acts, in all his works, both of providence and grace, so it is the highest end at which we can possibly aim. But no man can act for so sublime an end, but he that is taught of God, and fully persuaded that salvation is entirely by grace; so by grace, as to be detached from all works, dependent on no conditions to be performed by him. For, till then, he cannot but refer his supposed good actions principally to self, and his own salvation. This is the highest end for which such a person can possibly act, though other and baser ends are often proposed by him. But those works which are truly good, and which the Holy Spirit calls the *fruits of righteousness*, are, in the design of the performer, as well as in the event, *to the praise and glory of God*. Philip. i. 11. Now, though an unregenerate man may do those things which are materially good, and by a right rule, yet none who are ignorant of the Gospel of divine grace, can act from that generous principle, and for that exalted end, which are absolutely necessary to constitute a good work.

ABRAHAM BOOTH.

Our Good Works acceptable to God through Christ only.

As the persons of wicked men are hateful, so also all their performances are displeasing unto God: therefore it is said, *The Lord had respect to Abel, and to his offering*, Gen. iv. 4.; first to his person, and then to his service. If your persons be hateful to God, never expect that your

performances should be acceptable; and the reason is clear, because *there is but one way of acceptance for ourselves, and for our duties, and that is through Christ*. As the best are not in this life free from the remainders of sin, so neither are their best duties free from the mixtures of sin: now these sinful mixtures are so manifest unto God, that he must needs reject and abominate them, were it not that Christ, into whose hands they are first delivered, separates those mixtures, and fills up all their defects by the redundancy of his own merits. But the duties of wicked men are not so accepted in Christ: audacious and bold are they as to come before God without a Mediator to present them; and that God who is pleased with nothing but what is absolutely perfect, if not so in itself, yet at least in the mediation of his Son, seeing so many faults and flaws in the services of wicked men, cannot but cast them back as dung and filth in their faces; for God accepting of nothing but what is perfect, and *the services of wicked men wanting the merits of Jesus Christ*, they come up before God as unsavoury stench instead of sweet smells. This is the fruitless issue of all wicked men's duties; and therefore the Apostle tells us, *That without faith it is impossible to please God*, Heb. xi. because *faith is that grace that unites and makes us one with Christ, and gives us an interest in those merits that alone can procure acceptance for ourselves and for our services*. But now wicked and unregenerate men have not this faith, and therefore nothing that they do is well pleasing unto God: they may for the good works that they do be rewarded possibly with temporal blessings, and certainly with the mitigation of future punishment; but the reward of eternal life belongs to none but to those whose services are accepted through Him to whom their persons are united. See here then the miserable shipwreck of all the hopes of carnal men, who regard not what they are, but look only, and that too with a too favourable eye, upon what they do, and with the boasting Pharisee make large inventories of their good works. They fast twice a week, and give alms often; they are frequent in prayer, and constant at the ordinances; and therefore they think certainly they shall enter into heaven with the forwardest; but alas, what is all this? *God respects what thou art as well as what thou dost; and if all your duties proceed from*

an unchanged, unrenewed heart, he neither accepts them, nor regards them. Thou perhaps thinkest thou hast laid up a great mass of treasure for thy soul against the time to come; whereas at the last day it will be found to be but great heaps of dung and filth: nay, let me tell you, should you pray till your knees took root in the earth, could you nail your eyes to heaven, could you melt your hearts into tears, and vanish away into sight, yea, and spend every moment of your lives far better than ever you spent the best, *and yet should you remain unsanctified and unchanged*, all this would be of no account with God; but, instead of an *Euge, Well done, good and faithful servant*, you would meet with that unexpected demand, *Who hath required these things at your hands? Consider seriously and sadly of this, you who think that you have many duties upon the file in heaven, as so many evidences of your right and title unto heaven*: why now, as you would not have all these to be lost, and utterly in vain, so look to it that they proceed from hearts that are truly sanctified and renewed, without which they will be of no avail at all in God's esteem. And so much for the demonstrations of this point.

BP. HOPKINS.

Good Works in no wise the cause of our Salvation.

THE error which prompts ignorant and foolish men to be inflated with a false and deceitful trust is, that they always place in works a cause of their salvation: whereas, if we refer to the four kinds of causes which in the producing of effects philosophers direct to be taken into consideration, we shall find that works answer to none of them in effecting our salvation. For the Scripture every where openly declares that the *efficient* cause of our obtaining salvation is the mercy and gratuitous love of our Heavenly Father towards us; but that the *material* cause is Christ, together with his obedience, whereby he hath purchased righteousness for us. And what can we say is the *formal* or *instrumental* cause, but faith? And these three our Lord comprehends in one passage, when he says, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*. Again, the Apostle testifies that the *final* cause is the shewing forth of the justice of God, and the praise of his good-

ness, where he also makes mention of the other three in clear terms. For he thus addresses the Romans, *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, but they are justified freely by his grace*. Here you have the fountain head, that God laid hold of, or embraced, us in his gratuitous mercy—He goes on, *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*—here you have as it were the material whereby justification is completed for us. *By faith in his blood*—here is shewn the instrumental cause whereby the righteousness of Christ is applied to us. Lastly, he subjoins the *end*, when he says, *to declare his righteousness that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*. And to shew as he proceeds that this justice of God is consistent with reconciliation, he says expressly, that Christ was *set forth for a propitiation*. So in the first chap. to the Ephes. he teaches that we are received by God into favour through mere mercy; that that takes place by the intercession of Christ; is apprehended by faith; and that all is for this end, that the glory of the goodness of God may fully shine forth. Since we see that all the parts of our salvation thus stand *without* ourselves, in what respect can we now either trust or glory in works?

The most inveterate enemies of divine grace can raise no controversy with us regarding either the *efficient* or the *final* cause whereof we have spoken, except they should deny the whole of Scripture. They do make a kind of daub in the material and formal, as if our works held a place jointly with faith and the righteousness of Christ; but that also in the face of Scripture, which simply affirms that Christ is to us for righteousness, and for life, and that this benefit of righteousness is possessed by faith alone.

And whereas the saints not unfrequently feel themselves established and comforted by the remembrance of their own innocence and integrity, and even sometimes openly declare it, this comes to pass two ways; either because, by comparing their own good cause, with the bad cause of the wicked, they thence conceive an assurance of victory, not so much through any exaltation of their own righteousness, as through a just and merited condemnation of their adversaries; or because, independent of any comparison with others, whilst they reflect upon their state before God, the purity of their own conscience

affords them in some measure both consolation and confidence. The former reason we shall consider afterwards; regarding the latter we will now briefly explain how it may fully agree with what we have above laid down, namely, that in the judgment of God, there must be no secret reliance upon any trust in one's works, and no glorying through a high opinion of them.

The agreement therein is this; that the saints, when the question regardeth the foundation of their salvation, fix their eyes upon the goodness of God alone without respect to works. Nor do they only turn themselves to it as being the origin of all blessedness, but they take up their repose in it as being the fulness and completion thereof. The conscience having been thus grounded, raised up, and established, is also established in the view of its works, as far as they are evidences of God dwelling and ruling within us. Since then this trust in works cannot have any place except we have already cast the entire reliance of the soul upon the mercy of God, it ought not to appear contradictory to that estate whereupon it depends. Wherefore when we exclude trust in works, we would only that the mind of the Christian should not look to the merit of works, as any auxiliary towards his salvation, but should abide entirely in the free promise of righteousness. We do not however prohibit him from upholding and establishing this faith by any tokens of the goodwill of God towards him. For if the different gifts which God hath conferred upon us, when called to memory, are unto us like rays of the Divine countenance, whereby we are enlightened unto the contemplation of that most sublime light of goodness; much more so is the grace of good works, which shews that the Spirit of adoption has been imparted to us.

When therefore the saints confirm their faith from the innocency of their conscience, and take from thence occasion of rejoicing, they do no other than gather from the fruits of their calling, that they have been chosen by God into the place of sons. That then which Solomon declares, that *in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence*; that the saints sometimes make use of this appeal to be heard by the Lord, that they have walked before his face in uprightness and singleness; these have no place in laying a foundation for establishing the conscience; but are then only

of any avail when they are taken in an after place; both because that fear nowhere exists which can of itself establish a full confidence, and as to the integrity of which the saints are conscious, they are also conscious that many remains of the flesh are still intermingled with it; but inasmuch as from the fruits of their regeneration they fetch an argument of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, they thence greatly establish their minds to look for the help of God in all their necessities, since in so weighty a point they find him to be their Father. Nor can they however attain even to this except they have *first* laid hold of the goodness of God, sealed to them by no other certainty than that of the free promise; for if they set out to estimate it from their own good works, nothing will be more uncertain or more weak; since their works, if considered *by themselves*, will no less betoken the anger of God by their imperfection, than they will testify his favour by their purity, in whatever degree begun in them. Lastly, they so betoken the good-will of God, as nevertheless in no wise to divert us from the freeness of his grace and favour, in which, as the Apostle declares, is comprehended all length, and breadth, and depth, and height; as if he should say, Whithersoever the thoughts of Christians are turned, to whatever height they rise, however far and however wide they expand themselves, they ought not to go out of the love of Christ, but be, as it were, wholly taken up in contemplating it, for it comprehends infinity in all its dimensions. Therefore he saith that it exceeds and passeth all knowledge, and that, whilst we feel to how great a degree Christ hath loved us, we are filled with all the fulness of God. As elsewhere, when he boasts that the people of God are conquerors in every conflict, he straightway adds the reason thereof, *through him that loved them*.

We see then that the saints have no such reliance upon their works, as either ascribes any degree of merit to them, (inasmuch as they look upon them no otherwise than as gifts of God, from whence they may recognize his favour, and no other than signs of their calling, whence they may gather their own election,) or detracts in any respect from the full and free righteousness which we have in Christ, since it depends thereupon, and cannot subsist without it. Augustine expresses the same thing concisely and elegantly, when he

writes: 'I do not say to the Lord, despise not the works of *my* hands; I have sought out the Lord with *mine* hands, and am not deceived. No; I commend not the works of *mine* hands; for I fear lest when thou shalt look into them, thou shouldest find therein more sins than merits. This only do I say, this only do I ask, this only do I desire; despise not the work of *thine* hands. See thy work in me, not mine. For if thou shalt see mine, thou condemnest; if thou shalt see thine own, thou crownest. For even the good works, whatsoever are in me, are from thee.'

He lays down two reasons why he does not dare to vend his own works to God; because whatever he has of good works, he sees therein nothing of his own, and also because that again is overwhelmed by a multitude of sins. Whence it comes to pass that his conscience feels more fear and consternation therefrom, than it does confidence. Therefore his desire is that God should look upon his right deeds with no other view, than that recognising therein the grace of his *own* calling, he might perfect the work which *he* had begun.

But further, the Scripture represents the good works of believers as causes why the Lord blesses them. This then must be so understood as to leave unshaken what has been before laid down, that the *efficient* cause of our salvation is in the love of God the Father; the *material* in the obedience of God the Son; the *instrumental* in the illumination of God the Spirit, i. e. in faith; that the end or *final* cause is the glory of this so marvellous goodness of God. Now it is no contradiction thereto, that God should lay hold of our works as inferior causes. And how so? Because those whom through his mercy he has destined to the inheritance of eternal life, in his ordinary dealing he leads into the possession of it through good works. And he calls that which precedes in the order of the dispensation, the cause of that which follows after. On this principle he sometimes deduces eternal life from works; not that it is to be referred to them as its source, but since whomsoever he has chosen, he renders righteous, that he may eventually glorify them, the former grace, which is a step to that which follows, he in a measure makes the cause of it. But as often as the *true* cause is to be assigned, he does not direct us to betake ourselves to works, but to rest

in the contemplation of his mercy only. For what is it we are to learn from that expression of the Apostle, *the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life*? As he sets life in opposition to death, why does he not set righteousness in opposition to sin? As he states sin as the cause of death, why does he not so state righteousness as the cause of life? For thus the antithesis ought rightly to have been constructed, which by the above variation is interrupted. But the Apostle was desirous to express by that comparison the true state of the case, that death is *due* to the deserts of men, that life has its rise no where but in the sole *mercy* of God. Finally, in expressions of that nature, the order of things is rather adverted to than cause and effect; inasmuch as God, by accumulating graces upon graces, takes occasion from former gifts to follow them up by others, that he may omit nothing for the enriching of his servants; whilst however he so prosecutes his own course of liberality, his will is that we should always regard his free election as the fountain and source of all. For although he loveth the gifts which he daily confers upon us, inasmuch as they proceed from that fountain, yet it is our place to hold them by that tenure of free grace, which alone is able to support our souls; and whatever gifts of his Spirit he may subsequently vouchsafe us, so to connect under that first cause, that they may in no wise derogate from it.

CALVIN.

Indeed works are the fruits of Christian faith, and tokens, not causes, of salvation. Even as a tree that bringeth forth fruits; if the tree be good, it appeareth by the fruits, not because the fruit maketh the tree good, but because the tree maketh the fruit good. In like manner the deeds of the godly have nothing in themselves that may enable them to stand upright in judgment; but if they find any grace or reward, the same may not be ascribed to their own merit, but partly to mercy, partly to imputation, through the Son, that is the Redeemer: to mercy, I say, which doth forgive our evil deeds; to imputation, which accepteth our good works, though they be of themselves never so imperfect, as though they were perfect, and doth reward them with a crown of glory; so that the glory hereof is not now to be ascribed to men, but to God; not to righteousness, but to grace; not to works, but

to faith ; not to judgment, but to mercy. For confirmation whereof, if we seek for authority, who may require any one a more faithful witness, or of more approved authority, than the Apostle? who being sent unto the Gentiles, as to his proper and peculiar charge, what doth he preach unto them? *Not by the works which we have done*, saith he, *but for his mercy sake he hath saved us*. If words may obtain any credit with you, what can be spoken more plainly? if the authority of the witness may prevail, what more assured testimony can be sought for than Paul, that speaketh himself? JOHN FOX.

There have been great disputes one way and another, about the merit of good works; but I truly think they who have laboriously engaged in them, have been very idly, though very eagerly, employed about nothing, since the more sober of the schoolmen themselves acknowledge there can be no such thing as meriting from the blessed God, in the human, or, to speak more accurately, in any created nature whatsoever: nay, so far from any possibility of merit, there can be no room for reward any otherwise than of the sovereign pleasure and gracious kindness of God; and the more ancient writers, when they use the word merit, mean nothing by it but a certain correlate to that reward which God both promises and bestows of mere grace and benignity. Otherwise, in order to constitute what is properly called merit, many things must concur, which no man in his senses will presume to attribute to human works, though ever so excellent; particularly, that the thing done must not previously be matter of debt, and that it be entire, or our own act, unassisted by foreign aid; it must also be perfectly good, and it must bear an adequate proportion to the reward claimed in consequence of it. If all these things do not concur, the act cannot possibly amount to merit. Whereas I think no one will venture to assert, that any one of these can take place in any human action whatever. But why should I enlarge here, when one single circumstance overthrows all those titles? The most righteous of mankind would not be able to stand, if his works were weighed in the balance of strict justice; how much less then could they deserve that immense glory which is now in question! Nor is this to be denied only concerning the unbeliever and the sinner, but concerning

the righteous and pious believer, who is not only free from all the guilt of his former impenitence and rebellion, but endowed with the gift of the Spirit. The interrogation here expresses the most vehement negation, and signifies that no mortal, in whatever degree he is placed, if he be called to the strict examination of divine Justice, without daily and repeated forgiveness, could be able to keep his standing, and much less could he arise to that glorious height. 'That merit,' says Bernard, 'on which my hope relies, consists in these three things—the love of adoption, the truth of the promise, and the power of its performance.' This is the threefold cord which cannot be broken.

LEIGHTON.

All Works and Virtues without Grace, leave the Heart in the same state of Sin.

THERE must be grace before any duty can be performed acceptably unto God. But now most men pervert and disturb this method: and the ordinary way of disturbance is this; they are frequent in duties, but they perform them not either for grace, or from grace; neither that they may attain grace by them, nor that they may exercise grace in them: and yet, notwithstanding, these men think and hope to work out salvation by such duties as these are, making a leap from duties to salvation, neglecting to obtain that grace that can make their duties acceptable and saving; and hence it is that they make no quicker dispatch and riddance in their great work. Now such attempts as these are,

First, *discouraging and disheartening.* And,

Secondly, *they are vain and fruitless.*

First, *they are very discouraging.* Duties never flow freely from the soul where grace is not like a continual fountain to supply it. Job, speaking of the hypocrite, asks this question, xxxvii. 10. *Will he delight himself in God? will he always call upon him?* No, he will not. It is not possible that he should do so, though for a time he may drive at a high rate, praying both with fervency and affection, yet will he soon decay and faint, because he hath no life of grace to carry him through duties; but he finds them to flow stubbornly from him, and therefore through weariness and discontent at last he gives them over. The good works of graceless persons may be as flourishing as if indeed they were true saints;

but they have a root to supply them; *the root of the matter*, as Job speaks, *is not in them*, and therefore they are soon nipped, and fade away. It is simply impossible that a person, without the life and power of grace, should persevere in a cordial, affectionate performance of good works; interest, credit, respect, and natural conscience, are too weak wheels for so great a burden; it is grace only that can overbalance all outward discouragements; yea, and which is more, that alone can remove all inward also: this can make obedience sweet to a child of God, which to a wicked man must needs be irksome, and that because he hath no relish in them, *Thou savorest not the things that are of God*, Matt. xvi. 23. This may be much more said of graceless persons, because *they have no salt in them*, for so grace is called, that should make holy and heavenly things to be savory to them. What a torment is it to be still chewing an unsavory prayer and an unsavory meditation; to hear and speak those words that their ears cannot relish! 'Must I always,' says the sinner, 'offer this force to myself? Must I still strain and pump for tears and sighs? Were holiness as easy to me as it is to some, no life would I choose sooner than that; but I am straitened and pinched up, and all good things come out of me like the evil spirit, which rends and tears me, and is a torture and anguish to my heart and bowels:' and it is so, because in the performance of them there is a neglect of that grace that should make duties become easy, and therefore such a one will shortly give over duties themselves, which he finds to be so troublesome, yea, and also give over all hopes of attaining any good at all by them.

Secondly, *such works are also, as to the obtaining of the last and main end, vain and fruitless*, and that upon two accounts.

1. *Because the acting of grace is the life and spirit of all our works*, without which they are all but carcasses and dead things, and only equivocally called good works, even as the *picture* of a man may be called a man. *We are*, says the Apostle, *his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*. As after the *first creation* God took a survey of all the works of his hands, and pronounced them all very good, so there is no work of ours that God will pronounce to be a good work, but what is the effect of his creating

power; that is, the product of his second creation: *created*, says the Apostle, *to good works*, Eph. ii. 10. Good works are no otherwise necessary to salvation, but as they are the exercises of grace, by which we express the life and likeness of God; so only are they necessary unto salvation. How should grace be seen and known but by works? First, God imprinted his own image upon our souls in regeneration, and stamps us feature for feature, grace for grace, and glory for glory: but now because this is hid and concealed, therefore are we to copy forth this image in a holy conversation, and to express every grace in some duty or work of obedience or other. As those that we call *falling stars* dart from heaven, and draw after them long trains of light, so God would have us to shoot up to heaven, but yet to leave a train of light behind us. Our graces must shine always; we must go on in good works, and these good works are of no value or account with God, of which grace is not the end or principle. What says the Apostle? *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Can a man bestow all his goods upon the poor, and not be charitable? Indeed the word that we translate *charity*, might, for the avoiding of some mistakes, better have been translated *love*; but, however, we must take *charity* for a disposition to relieve the wants and necessities of others with respect of *love* to God and his image; if this good work be not from grace through a principle of *love* to God and obedience to his command, it is but the empty shell and husk of a good work, and it avails a man nothing. Yea, further, if after this, *I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing*; if my soul burn not as clear and bright in *love*, as my *body* in the flames, it availeth me nothing, I burn only what was dead before, and offer a carcass instead of a sacrifice. There is no work or duty how specious soever, that is of any profit to the soul, if that work or duty hath not the life and power of some grace or other expressed in it. Well then, this is the first ground why works without grace are fruitless, because they are empty and lifeless. Grace is the life and spirit of good works.

2. All works and duties whatever without grace leave the heart in the same estate of sin, and therefore the person in

the same estate of wrath and condemnation as before. For,

First, all of them are not a sufficient expiation for the guilt of any one sin. Should such men pray and sigh till their breath were turned into a cloud, and covered the face of the whole sky; should they weep till they drowned themselves in their own tears, yet if all this could be supposed to be only the remorse of nature, and not true and godly sorrow, they would still be under the same state of condemnation as the most seared sinner in the world. The Prophet Micah tells of some that bade very high for pardon and forgiveness, as if they were resolved to carry it at any rate whatever. *Wherewith, say they, shall we come before the Lord and bow ourselves before the Most High God? Shall we come before him with burnt-offerings, and with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, and with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall we give our first-born for our transgressions, the fruit of our bodies for the sin of our souls?* Micah vi. 6, 7. What high rates are here bidden, and yet all this falls short! There is but one grace, and that is *faith*, that can give us a right and title to that righteousness that shall be a sufficient expiation and atonement for all our sins.

Secondly, all attainments and attempts, all endeavours and duties, without grace, can never mortify and subdue the power and dominion of any one lust or corruption. Men may divert, and chain, and restrain their corruptions, and impale in their lusts, so that they shall not break forth into any outrageous wickedness; but yet without grace they can never subdue them, because it is grace alone that can lay the axe to the root of this evil tree. Well, then, notwithstanding all that hath been said concerning the power of nature, what men may do thereby, and how far they may go, yet here you see what impotency there is in nature without grace, and what it cannot reach to perform. But now this is not spoken that hereby any should be discouraged from working, and because some doubt of the truth of their graces, that therefore they should desist from a course of holiness and obedience; this were plainly to thwart the whole design of this subject: no, all that hath been said is, to persuade men not to rest satisfied in any work of obedience or religion, in which some grace is not breathed or exercised,

nor to look upon them at all as inductive to salvation as in themselves, but as in reference to true grace. How many poor souls are there, who, because they run on in a round of duties, because they do something that they call good works, think that salvation is as surely their own, as if all the promises in the Scripture were sealed and delivered to them by God himself! And yet, poor creatures, never examine or regard from what principle this their obedience flows, whether from a principle of grace, or from the old corrupt principle of nature, new-vamped from some new operations of the common spirit. Believe it, this is not that obedience that God requires, nor that he will accept; an inward *groan*, if breathed by grace, is of more account with God, and will be more available to the soul than the most pompous and specious services of unregenerate men. What is it to God, when you offer not only the blind and the lame, but the dead also? Is it not rather an abomination than obedience? The Apostle tells us, *without works faith is dead*, James iii. 20. And it is as true on the other side also, that works without faith and other graces of the Spirit, are not only dead, but rotten and noisome. Every duty men perform in a graceless state and condition, God must needs loath it and them for it; *the prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord*, Prov. xxviii. 9. It is as hateful unto God, as vapours that ascend up out of tombs, from putrefied bodies, are unto us. What then? Must such persons give up themselves to sin therefore? God forbid! No, rather let such think thus; if our duties and our righteousness be so loathsome, what are our sins and iniquities? Though every sinner be *dead in sins and trespasses*, yet is it less offensive to have a dead carcass embalmed than to have it lie open. Still therefore continue working, but in your working, first aim at the obtaining of grace, before you aim at the obtaining of heaven and salvation; let it at no time content you that such and such duties you have performed, but look what grace have you acted in them; what is there of God breathing in this prayer that I now put up? How am I in hearing, in meditation, in discoursing of the things of God? Is my heart holy and spiritual? Are my affections pure and fervent? Are my graces active and vigorous? And are they vigorous in this work

of obedience? Else to perform duties, and to neglect grace, that alone can enable us to perform duties acceptably, is only to go to hell a little more cleanly.

BP. HOPKINS.

Merely human virtues, whether considered in the heathen philosophers, or in such as by the world are called worthy people, are indeed fine flowers, but they have a worm within them. Whatever has not grace for its principle, whatever is not of faith, and is done without love to God, without a reference to him, but with a view to ourselves only, is a dead work in the sight of God.

Yet how many people have been, and are still deceiving themselves in this point.

The heathen sages, undoubtedly, believed themselves possessed of exquisite and solid virtues; they did not suspect that their hearts were deceitful, and their virtues spurious. How many of such as are called Christians possess heathen virtues only, without being aware of it, without being willing to suspect their hearts of imposing on them! Human virtues are like false coin, which is good in appearance, and indebted for its currency to the misery of mankind. But, is it not astonishing, that not those only among whom this false coin is circulated, take it for genuine; but even those who coined it are so much blinded, as to esteem and look upon it as sterling?

SUPERVILLE.

SECTION XVI.—ON THE FUTURE STATE.

The Assurance of a Future Judgment.

THAT there is a judgment to come after this life, will appear demonstrable, whether we consider ourselves who are to undergo it, or God who is to execute it. If we do but reflect upon the frame and temper of our own spirits, we cannot but collect and conclude from thence, that we are to give an account of our actions, and that a judgment hereafter is to pass upon us. There is in the soul of every man a conscience, and wheresoever it is, it giveth testimony to this truth. The antecedent or directive conscience tells us what we are to do, and the subsequent or reflexive conscience warns us what we are to receive. Looking back upon the actions we have done, it either approves or condemns them: and if it did no more, it would only prove that there is a judgment in this life, and every man his own judge. But seeing it doth not only allow and approve our good actions, but also doth create a complacency, apology, and confidence in us; seeing it doth not only disprove and condemn our evil actions, but doth also constantly accuse us, and breed a fearful expectation and terror in us; and all this pre-scinding from all relation to any thing either to be enjoyed or suffered in this life: it followeth that this conscience is not so much a judge as a witness, bound over to give testimony, for or against us, at some judgment after this life to pass upon us. For all men are *a law unto themselves*, and

have the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, Rom. ii. 14.

Again; if we consider the God who made us, and hath full dominion over us, whether we look upon him in himself or in his word, we cannot but expect a judgment from him. First; if we contemplate God in himself, we must acknowledge him to be the Judge of all mankind, so that a man shall say, *Verily he is a God that judgeth the earth*. Now the same God who is our Judge is, by an attribute necessary and inseparable, just; and this justice is so essential to his Godhead, that we may as well deny him to be God, as to be just. It was a rational expostulation which Abraham made, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Gen. xviii. 25. We may therefore infallibly conclude that God is a most just Judge; and if he be so, we may as infallibly conclude that after this life he will judge the world in righteousness. For as the affairs of this present world are ordered, though they lie under the disposition of Providence, they show no sign of an universal justice. The wicked and disobedient persons are often so happy, as if they were rewarded for their impieties; the innocent and religious often so miserable, as if they were punished for their innocency. Nothing more certain than that in this life rewards are not

correspondent to the virtues, punishments not proportionable to the sins, of men. Which consideration will enforce one of these conclusions; either that there is no Judge of the actions of mankind; or if there be a Judge, he is not just, he renders no proportionate rewards or punishments; or, lastly, if there be a Judge, and that Judge be just, then is there a judgment in another world, and the effects thereof concern another life. Seeing then we must acknowledge that there is a Judge, which judgeth the earth; seeing we cannot deny but God is that Judge, and all must confess that God is most just; seeing the rewards and punishments of this life are no way answerable to so exact a justice as that which is divine must be; it followeth that there is a judgment yet to come, in which God will show a perfect demonstration of his justice, and to which every man shall in his own bosom carry an undeniable witness of all his actions.

BP. PEARSON.

Necessity for Believing a Future Punishment.

It is necessary to profess faith in Christ as Judge of the quick and the dead, for the strengthening of our hope, for the augmenting of our comfort, for the establishing of our assurance of eternal life. If we look upon the judgment to come only as revealing our secrets, as discerning our actions, as sentencing our persons according to the works done in the flesh, there is not one of us can expect life from that tribunal, or happiness at the last day. We must confess that we have all sinned, and that there is not any sin which we have committed but deserves the sentence of death; we must acknowledge that the best of our actions bear no proportion to eternity, and can challenge no degree of that weight of glory; and therefore in a judgment, as such, there can be nothing but a fearful expectation of eternal misery, and an absolute despair of everlasting happiness. It is necessary therefore that we should believe that Christ shall sit upon the throne, that our Redeemer shall be our Judge, that we shall receive our sentence not according to the rigour of the law, but the mildness and mercies of the Gospel; and then we may look upon not only the precepts but also the promises of God; whatsoever sentence in the sacred Scripture speaketh any thing of hope; whatsoever

text administereth any comfort; whatsoever argument drawn from thence can breed in us any assurance, we may confidently make use of them all in reference to the judgment to come; because by that Gospel which contains them all we shall be judged. If we consider whose Gospel it is, and who shall judge us by it, *we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;—for which cause he is not ashamed to call us brethren*, Eph. v. 30; Heb. ii. 11. As one of our brethren, he hath redeemed us, he hath laid down his life as a ransom for us. He is our High Priest, who made an atonement for our sins, *a merciful and faithful High Priest in all things, being made like unto his brethren*. He who is Judge is also our Advocate; and who shall condemn us, if he shall pass the sentence upon us, who maketh intercession for us? well therefore may *we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him* unto the throne of that Judge, who is our brother, who is our Redeemer, who is our High Priest, who is our Advocate, who will not by his word at the last day condemn us, because he hath already in the same word absolved us, saying, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*, John v. 24. BP. PEARSON.

The Eternity of Future Punishment.

The wicked are to go into outer darkness; there is to be weeping and gnashing of teeth; they are to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; there they shall drink of the wrath of God, poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation. Whatever there may be of figure in some of these expressions, as much as this they certainly import,—that the future state of the wicked will be a state of exquisite torment, both of body and mind,—of torments, not only intense in degree, but incapable of intermission, cure, or end,—a condition of unmixed and perfect evil, not less deprived of future hope than of present enjoyment.

It is amazing that a danger so strongly set forth should be disregarded; and this is the more amazing, when we take a view of the particular cases and complexions of

character among which this disregard is chiefly found. They may be reduced to three different classes, according to the three different passions by which they are severally overcome,—ambition, avarice, and sensuality. Personal consequence is the object of the first class; wealth, of the second; pleasure, of the third. Personal consequence is not to be acquired but by great undertakings, bold in the first conception, difficult in execution, extensive in consequence. Such undertakings demand great abilities. Accordingly, we commonly find in the ambitious man a superiority of parts, in some measure proportioned to the magnitude of his designs: it is his particular talent to weigh distant consequences, to provide against them, and to turn every thing, by a deep policy and forecast, to his own advantage. It might be expected that this sagacity of understanding would restrain him from the desperate folly of sacrificing an unfading crown for that glory that must shortly pass away. Again, your avaricious money-getting man is generally a character of wonderful discretion. It might be expected that he would be exact to count his gains, and would be the last to barter possessions which he might hold for ever, for a wealth that shall be taken from him, and shall not profit him in the day of wrath. Then, for those servants of sin, the effeminate sons of sensual pleasure, these are a feeble, timid race. It might be expected that these, of all men, would want firmness to brave the danger. Yet so it is; the ambitious pursues a conduct which must end in shame; the miser, to be rich now, makes himself poor for ever; and the tender, delicate voluptuary shrinks not at the thought of endless burnings!

These things could not be, but for one of these two reasons,—either that there is some lurking incredulity in men—*an evil heart of unbelief*, that admits not the Gospel doctrine of punishment in its full extent; or, that their imaginations set the danger at a prodigious distance.

The Scriptures are not more explicit in the threatenings of wrath upon the impenitent, than in general assertions of God's forbearance and mercy. These assertions are confirmed by the voice of nature, which loudly proclaims the goodness as well as the power of the universal Lord. Man is frail and imperfect in his original constitution. This, too, is the doctrine of the

Scriptures; and every man's experience unhappily confirms it. Human life, by the appointment of Providence, is short. *He hath made our days as it were a span long.* 'Is it, then, to be supposed, that this good, this merciful, this long-suffering God, should doom his frail, imperfect creature man to endless punishment, for the follies,—call them, if you please, the crimes, of a short life? Is he injured by our crimes, that he should seek this vast revenge; or does his nature delight in groans and lamentations? It cannot be supposed. What revelation declares of the future condition of the wicked, is prophecy; and prophecy, we know, deals in poetical and exaggerated expressions.' Such, perhaps, is the language which the sinner holds within himself, when he is warned of the wrath to come; and such language he is taught to hold, in the writings and the sermons of our modern sectaries. He is taught, that the punishment threatened is far more heavy than will be executed: he is told, that the words which, in their literal meaning, denote endless duration, are, upon many occasions, in Scripture, as in common speech, used figuratively or abusively, to denote very long, but yet definite, periods of time. These notions are inculcated in the writings, not of infidels, but of men who, with all their errors, must be numbered among the friends and advocates of virtue and religion;—but, while we willingly bear witness to their worth, we must not the less strenuously resist their dangerous innovations.

The question concerning the eternity of punishment (like some others, which, considered merely as questions of philosophy, may be of long and difficult discussion) might be brought to a speedy determination, if men, before they heat themselves with argument, would impartially consider how far Reason, in her natural strength, may be competent to the inquiry. I do not mean to affirm generally that Reason is not a judge in matters of religion: but I do maintain, that there are certain points concerning the nature of the Deity, and the schemes of Providence, upon which Reason is dumb and revelation is explicit; and that, in these points, there is no certain guide but the plain, obvious meaning of the written Word. The question concerning the eternal duration of the torments of the wicked is one of these. From any natural knowledge that we have of

the Divine character, it never can be proved that the scheme of eternal punishment is unworthy of him.

It cannot be proved that this scheme is inconsistent with his natural perfections,—his essential goodness. What is essential goodness? It is usually defined by a single property,—the love of virtue for its own sake. The definition is good, as far as it goes; but is it complete? Does it comprehend the whole of the thing intended? Perhaps not. Virtue and vice are opposites: love and hate are opposites. A consistent character must bear opposite affections toward opposite things. To love virtue, therefore, for its own sake, and to hate vice for its own sake, may equally belong to the character of essential goodness; and thus, as virtue in itself, and for its own sake, *must* be the object of God's love and favour; so, incurable vice, in itself, and for its own sake, *may* be the object of his hatred and persecution.

Again, it cannot be proved that the scheme of eternal punishment is inconsistent with the relative perfections of the Deity—with those attributes which are displayed in his dealings with the rational part of his creation: for who is he that shall determine in what proportions the attributes of justice and mercy, forbearance and severity, ought to be mixed up in the character of the Supreme Governor of the universe? Nor can it be proved that eternal punishment is inconsistent with the schemes of God's moral government: for who can define the extent of that government? Who among the sons of men hath an exact understanding of its ends—a knowledge of its various parts, and of their mutual relations and dependencies? Who is he that shall explain by what motives the righteous are to be preserved from falling from their future state of glory? That they shall not fall, we have the comfortable assurance of God's word. But by what means is the security of their state to be effected? Unquestionably by the influence of moral motives upon the minds of free and rational agents. But who is so enlightened as to foresee what particular motives may be the fittest for the purpose? Who can say, These might be sufficient,—these are superfluous? Is it impossible that among other motives, the sufferings of the wicked may have a salutary effect? And shall God spare the wicked, if the preservation of the righteous

should call for the perpetual example of their punishment?—Since, then, no proof can be deduced, from any natural knowledge that we have of God, that the scheme of eternal punishment is unworthy of the Divine character,—since there is no proof that it is inconsistent either with the natural perfections of God, or with his relative attributes,—since it may be necessary to the ends of his government,—upon what grounds do we proceed, when we pretend to interpret, to qualify, and to extenuate the threatenings of holy writ?

The original frailty of human nature, and the providential shortness of human life, are alleged to no purpose in this argument. Eternal punishment is not denounced against the frail, but against the hardened and perverse; and life is to be esteemed long or short, not from any proportion it may bear to eternity (which would be equally none at all, though it were protracted to ten thousand times its ordinary length), but according as the space of it may be more or less than may be just sufficient for the purposes of such a state as our present life is, of discipline and probation. There must be a certain length of time, the precise measure of which can be known to none but God, within which, the promises and the threatenings of the Gospel, joined with the experience which every man's life affords of God's power and providence—of the instability and vanity of all worldly enjoyments,—there must, in the nature of things, be a certain measure of time, within which, if at all, this state of experience, joined with future hopes and fears, must produce certain degrees of improvement in moral wisdom and in virtuous habit. If, in all that time, no effect is wrought, the impediment can only have arisen from incurable self-will and obstinacy. If the ordinary period of life be more than is precisely sufficient for this trial and cultivation of the character, those characters which shall show themselves incorrigibly bad, will have no claim upon the justice or the goodness of God, to abridge the time of their existence in misery, so that it may bear some certain proportion to the short period of their wicked lives. Qualities are not to be measured by duration: they bear no more relation to it than they do to space. The hatefulness of sin is seated in itself—in its own internal quality of evil: by that its

ill-deservings are to be measured,—not by the narrowness of the limits, either of time or place, within which the good providence of God hath confined its power of doing mischief.

If, on any ground, it were safe to indulge a hope that the suffering of the wicked may have an end, it would be upon the principle adopted by the great Origen, and by other eminent examples of learning and piety which our own times have seen,—that the actual endurance of punishment in the next life will produce effects to which the apprehension of it in this had been insufficient, and end, after a long course of ages, in the reformation of the worst characters. But the principle that this effect is possible that the heart may be reclaimed by force, is at best precarious; and the only safe principle of human conduct is the belief, that unrepented sin will suffer endless punishment hereafter.

Perhaps, the distance at which imagination sets the prospect of future punishment may have a more general influence in diminishing the effect of God's merciful warnings, than any sceptical doubts about the intensity or the duration of the sufferings of the wicked. The Spirit of God means to awaken us from this delusion, when he tells us, by the Apostles and holy men of old, that the *coming of the Lord draweth nigh*. He means, by these declarations, to remind every man that his particular doom is near: for, whatever may be the season appointed in the secret counsels of God, for *that great and terrible day, when the heavens and the earth shall flee from the face of him who shall be seated on the throne, and their place shall be no more found*,—whatever may be the destined time of this public catastrophe, the end of the world, with respect to every individual, takes place at the conclusion of his own life. In the grave there will be no repentance; no virtues can be acquired—no evil habits thrown off. With that character, whether of virtue or of vice, with which a man leaves the world, with that he must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. In that moment, therefore, in which his present life ends, every man's future condition becomes irreversibly determined. In this sense, to every one that standeth here *the coming of the Lord draweth nigh,—the Judge is at the door; let us watch, therefore, and pray;*—

watch over ourselves, and pray for the succours of God's grace, that we may be able to stand before the Son of man. Nor shall vigilance and prayer be ineffectual. On the incorrigible and perverse,—on those who mock at God's threatenings, and reject his promises,—on these only the severity of wrath will fall. But, for those who lay these warnings seriously to heart—who dread the pollution of the world, and flee from sin as from a serpent—who fear God's displeasure more than death, and seek his favour more than life, though much of frailty will to the last adhere to them, yet these are the objects of the Father's mercy—of the Redeemer's love. For these he died,—for these he pleads,—these he supports and strengthens with his Spirit,—these he shall lead with him triumphant to the mansions of glory, when Sin and Death shall be cast into the lake of fire.

BP. HORSLEY.

I know some have denied a local hell. But it is very clear from Scripture: *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels*; i. e. depart from the place where I am, into that where the devil and his angels are to be. And again, the devils besought our Saviour *that he would not command them to go out into the deep*, or, as it is in the original, into the abyss. It appears then that the bad go from this world, where there is only a mixture of evils, into a scene of mere misery, horror, and torment. If God, who delights to communicate happiness to as many beings as the universe can conveniently hold, has, in pursuance of this scheme, filled every beautiful and agreeable province in it with creatures susceptible of felicity in the pursuit of virtue and perfection; the necessary consequence is, that those creatures who have disqualified themselves for happiness, must be condemned to dismal and uncomfortable mansions; from which, probably, after the last adjustment of things, there will be no outlet nor possibility of making an inroad upon the rest of the creation. There will be a congruity between the nature of the place, and that of the inhabitants, which will settle them there: and every one, like Judas, must go to his own place. It is idle to dispute whether the fire denounced against the unrelenting be metaphorical or real. Suppose it a metaphor; yet those metaphors

which represent things of another world, do not generally exceed the originals, or the reality of the things designed to be shadowed out by them.

The ingredients of future punishment are partly positive, and partly the natural consequences of bad actions, viz. appetites ever craving and clamorous, but ever unsatisfied; *tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil*: an eternal banishment from the blessed presence of God and the society of angels, and *just men made perfect*; and a confinement to the company of malicious spirits, an everlasting torment to themselves, and ever tormenting all about them.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? our Saviour cried out, when he felt only a momentary and partial eclipse of the light of the Divine Countenance. But when a deep and genuine despair saddens the scenes all around, without the least beam of light from any point of heaven, then—I was going to describe the misery. But if words can paint this night-piece of horror, the copy must be drawn by those whose unhappiness it will be to be too well acquainted with the original. Here *the body pressed down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle the mind, that mused upon many things*: but when the soul shall be clothed with refined matter, which will not encumber her in her operations, her whole duration will be one continued stretch of thought, without any pause or intermission. And what a misery must it be to be thinking still, and yet to have little or nothing to think on but endless misery? To be at once deprived of all sensual delights, and cut off from the enjoyment of rational and substantial bliss, is a misery that we cannot now conceive, and, may we never feel!

REV. JER. SEED.

The General Unbelief of Future Punishment.

IN one point, and that too of infinite moment, the unbelief of men is palpable. Where is the man who duly and fully believes that the punishments of hell are eternal? They are so believed indeed by real Christians, who rely on the Saviour that delivered them *from the wrath to come*. And this shows the importance of that awful truth. For how can men believe in, and worthily receive, Jesus Christ, as delivering them from the wrath to come, if

they neither believe the reality of that wrath, nor feel that they are justly obnoxious to it? In truly humbling the mind, and bringing it to a hearty acquiescence in the justice of the Divine decrees herein; and in deeply impressing this same awful truth, lies no small part of that work of God's Holy Spirit, which *casteth down imaginations and every high thing that exalleth itself against the knowledge of God*. But when men begin really to think of the subject, what enmity, what hardness of heart, what pride, what impatience is felt in the soul! Perhaps, did the passions and prejudices of men stand as much in their way, on the point of eternal happiness, it might be found that they really believe as little of life eternal as they do of everlasting punishment.—Yet whether they believe it or not, both are described by the same lips of unerring Truth in one verse, *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal*. But men have no objection to be eternally happy, though little knowing in what that happiness consists; and when something of its real excellent nature is laid before them, they are ready to call it foolishness; so far are they from believing what is revealed concerning it.

To a man wedded to his vices, what a prodigious, but false relief is it to think,—if he can persuade himself to think so,—that it is possible he may shun the worm that dieth not, and the fire that shall not be quenched. Under this notion how does the depraved spirit feel itself at ease in a course of sin! How charitable, and noble, and liberal does this plan seem, which delivers a man from slavish fear of punishment, and allows him to practise sin without terror, though it insults the majesty and holiness of God! Then he has attained what many call true liberty of soul. How in our times has this spirit grown to its height! If the depression and contempt of the clergy were the only bad consequence of it, we ought to bear them with patience. But precious souls are, in this way, ruined to eternity. For let it be remembered that our Saviour in Mark ix. six times expressly asserts the eternity of hell torments; and thence infers the duty and necessity of cutting off the hand and foot, and plucking out the eye that offends. If it be not true, what shall we say of him who has told us so? Poor wretched sinner! thy hope of being saved

in thy sins is vain ; as vain, as it is to hope that Christ, the eternal Truth, shall prove false in what he has said ! Despair then of this hope, and seek, through his grace, to mortify thy vices.

REV. JOS. MILNER.

Eternal Punishment not inconsistent with the Divine Perfections.

THE rejection of eternal punishment from the Christian system, is not because that opinion hath no place in the Bible, but because it is conceived to be unfriendly to the Divine Perfections. It is our business to shew that it is not unfriendly to them.

1. In the doctrine of eternal punishment there is nothing contrary to the power of God. It hath been confidently asserted, that it is impossible for any creature to live in eternal torments : and the language of the wicked in Isaiah, xxxiii. 14, *Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* for want of better proof, hath been alleged in support of it. But is it modest to deny that the same *mighty God can establish sinners for correction*, Habak. i. 12, who once preserved his servants in the flame of a fiery furnace ? May not the wicked, like the bush in Mount Horeb, which, though burning, was not consumed, by a supernatural provision be made to exist for ever in hell ?

2. But, though men are willing to limit the Divine Power, they are very jealous of the Divine liberty, which is represented as infringed, unless God hath a right of revoking or executing the sentences of his judgment. Not to say, that it is too late to argue from the liberty of a perfect Being, when his purpose is declared,—and that this attribute must be considered as in concert with his unchangeableness and his veracity,—this argument, if pursued, would lead us to deny the probability of any punishment. If God be free to reduce the sufferings of eternity to the sufferings of a thousand years, he is equally free to reduce them to the sufferings of an hour, or altogether to abolish them. The latter would be most consistent with the modern fond notions of tenderness and philanthropy. To the moral perfections of God, however, and not to his power and liberty, the cause we espouse is considered as most injurious.

3. To the veracity of God, indeed, it is evidently most friendly. Of this perfec-

tion the partisans of the contrary opinion are the violators. Analogical reasoning from man to God hath never been more unworthily and unhappily employed than here. Because impetuous and ignorant beings may find it necessary to omit the execution of their threatenings, or, as it is gently expressed, may be better than their word, such a conduct has been considered as no impeachment of the Divine faithfulness. It is a sufficient answer to this representation, that *the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he should repent*, 1 Sam. xv. 29. To say that God may be better than his word, is saying neither more nor less than that his word is not true. And to expect any thing from Jesus Christ which is not contained in his covenant, is, in fact, to renounce the Gospel.

4. The purity of God is another attribute which the assertors of eternal misery will be allowed to defend.

The Holy Spirit suggests to us the most striking conceptions of the purity of Jehovah. In his sight the heavens are not clean, Job xv. 15. But familiar with the practice of sin, and under the imperceptible influence of infidelity, we debase in our ideas this glorious attribute, and forget that sin is utterly abominable and accursed before God. When Isaiah, vi. 5, felt the impression of the Divine purity, as celebrated by the seraphim, how hateful did he appear in his own eyes. Nay, such is the holiness of the King of saints, that he doth not spare the minute offences of his servants. Though their sins are pardoned by the blood of the everlasting covenant, yet, as in the case of David, they must experience the bitter effects of them. *The tribulations they endure are a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God*, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5, and his hatred of sin. In his moral government of the world, he doth not interpose to prevent certain natural consequences which he hath annexed to the visitations of his law. *Judgment*, says Saint Peter, *begins at the house of God ; and if it first begin with us, what shall be the end of them who obey not the Gospel of God?* 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* How can God look with any degree of favour upon those who have died, and who are unalterably fixed, in the habits of sin ? Now this is the case of all the inhabitants

of hell. They have contracted a moral incapacity of amendment; and in consequence of their own obstinate depravity, which would never submit to the proffered grace of the Gospel, they will continue for ever the enemies of God, subject to those sinful qualities and dispositions which they have formed here, and which are directly opposite to the perfection and holiness of the Divine Nature. Such views as these of the purity of God, must be subservient to our ideas of eternal misery: and such views also as these of the situation of the lost, will tend to vindicate his goodness and his justice.

5. Of the attribute of Divine goodness, it has been thought sufficient to say, that it is not, as in man, a virtue of constitution, but an independent perfection, consistent with infinite wisdom, and truth, and equity. It may, moreover, be reconciled with eternal punishment, if we consider that hell is the portion of those only who have despised the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering. Not in remitting the punishment of the impenitent, but *in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, John iv. 9. iii. 16. And in order that they may this believe and be saved, God graciously sets before them death and life, the terrors of the Law, and the promises of the Gospel. The means of grace are put into their hands, and the Holy Spirit is striving with their hearts. They are solicited in the most affectionate manner to embrace life, and assured that God willeth not their death, and that there will be joy in heaven on their conversion. Can it be an impeachment of the Divine goodness, if they who thus perish in spite of it be given over to the consequences of their obstinacy,—if they have judgment without mercy, who have abused the season, and deliberately despised the offer of mercy?

In an age in which benevolence is the fashionable, and the only virtue,—in which we hear so much of the feelings of the heart, and the refinements of delicacy, and so little fear of God and a regard to his glory,—men will very plausibly harangue on the inconsistency of eternal punishment with infinite goodness. But this is to address the passions and prejudice and corrupt taste of the world. It is to argue

from the partial views of men. It is to forget that God is the governor of the universe—that he consults the good of the whole system—that he acts by unchangeable laws—that it is unreasonable to expect any alteration in his laws in favour of those, who had a fair warning given them by God himself, but who would never submit to the measures of his providence nor believe the declarations of his will,—Hobbery's Serm. xii. It is to forget, also, what hath very ably been urged upon the subject, 'that there is a previous obligation upon every one that cometh into the world, either to do those duties, or to submit to those penalties, which preserve or promote the general happiness, and that no evil is suffered to continue in the creation, but to avoid a greater.' Seed, Serm. u. s.

6. With regard to the justice of God on this point, there have been many objections. There have been also as many replies, and such as should, at least, silence objections: unless we knew more than we can possibly know in this world, of the nature of sin and the moral government of God, the argument drawn from the supposed disproportion between offences committed in time, and torments inflicted for ever, can have little weight. With our limited ideas, it is impossible to state accurately the proportion between guilt and punishment. If the length of time employed in committing sin were the measure of its punishment, a life of sixty years' disobedience would only be succeeded by sixty years of torments. Nay, the wicked are punished in this world; and we often say, in pressing holiness upon men, that the penal evils which naturally follow sin here are greater than its pleasures. Upon the idea of proportion then God is unrighteous who taketh vengeance in another world. The shortest period of future misery is as indefensible as the longest. *He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much*, Luke xvi. 10. But we must know all the consequences and tendencies of sin, as it is opposite to the greatest good, as it increaseth the general corruption, as it disorders the government of God, before we can estimate its guilt. It is in this view that we defend the conduct of human legislation in punishing crimes, small in themselves, with death. *And shall mortal man be more just than God?* Besides, men punish with death, while there is a possibility of a criminal's repenting; but

we may safely affirm, that God never punisheth till his grace hath been finally rejected, and men have sold themselves to work wickedness beyond any possibility of redemption.

In these circumstances, what can be expected but that God's *anger should be accomplished, and his fury rest upon them?* Ezek. v. 13. He who seeth from everlasting to everlasting, and calleth the things that are not as though they were, knoweth that the disposition of habitual offenders would never lead them from death unto life.* When men have been long accustomed to do evil, even with the means of grace in their power, their recovery is desperate: of this the antediluvian world is an instance. From one century to another, God had given them space to repent of their abominations, and they repented not. Thus it is with all impenitent sinners, and where is the injustice of their punishment? Is God bound to alter the constitution of his dispensations, to make men happy against their will, and against their nature? As to their repentance in hell, without the means of grace, it is impossible; and we have no warrant to expect that such means will be afforded them. The wrath of God will, indeed, cause them exceedingly to fear and quake. They will be covered with remorse and confusion. But where are the dispositions of love and obedience? Without these they would harden again, like metal taken from the furnace, should a period be assigned to their sufferings. I promised, lastly, to remark—

The consistency of our doctrine with the conduct of God:

The speculations of men yield less reluctantly to facts, than to reasonings. Now it is a fact incontrovertible in the conversion of sinners, that, when they begin to consider their ways, and God lets loose his terrors, they are sensible of the abominable turpitude and malignity of sin, and acquit that justice which denounces eternal punishment. As repentance, of which this idea is an inseparable character, is the work of the Spirit of Truth, I have always considered this fact as decisive upon the subject. Such a persuasion, in such circumstances, cannot but proceed from him

that calleth us. Now, if this be the case in the present world, when a man is but just awakened from the dream of sin, and can only recollect a few of his unnumbered transgressions, how will it be with the criminal in that state, when, his understanding being immensely extended, the soul will comprehend, at one view, all her accumulated guilt, all her secret and all her presumptuous sins?

The justice of God, in punishing impenitent sinners with everlasting misery, hath been rashly and presumptuously arraigned. But is it repugnant to his conduct in the pardon and salvation of the penitent, by Jesus Christ? Doth not the substitution of an innocent person for the guilty, equally militate against our imperfect notions of equity, as the infliction of an eternal penalty for a temporary transgression? Till we can fully account for the former of these doctrines, let us not be offended at the latter. At least, let us be persuaded, that *the just Lord is in the midst of us, and that he will not do iniquity*, Zeph. iii. 5. *He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he*, Deut. xxxii. 4. *He will be justified in his sayings, and will overcome when he is judged*, Rom. iii. 4. DR. CROUCH.

Men are incompetent to decide upon the fitness of God's Judgments.

THINK you it hard to be thus forced to judge meanly of yourselves, and your many deservings?—Then,—and not till then,—begin to reason against the Divine Justice and the sentence of the law, when you know all the mysteries of God's glorious character and kingdom. Then, when you are shot-up to such an unmeasurable height of wisdom, as to be fit judges of HIS proceedings; when you can measure how much evil there is in sin; and how little harm would result to the whole system of creation, if the universal Lord should dispense with the breach of his laws, or even punish his creatures in a less degree than he threatens to do; when you have settled these things, then rejudge Divine Justice, censure the sentence of the Almighty; and tell the Most High, that your petty sins deserve not such treatment.

But, as you scarce have yet come to all this knowledge, and will probably find the glass of your life emptied of its sand, be-

* *Patitur penas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam æcelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum
Facti crimen habet.*

fore you have finished your calculations on these subjects, it will be your wisdom in the mean time, to attend rather to things, of which you *may* be judges. Look around you to plain matters of fact. These shew the world to be in a fallen, perishing state. Sin and misery overspread it. Neither will you deny, that if you had the management of this world's affairs, such and such sins should not have been punished so severely, as you find they are punished in the course of God's providence. For example, God often punishes extravagance, and libertines, with want, with diseases, and with untimely death. If you had been left the judges of these matters, you would not have thought it should be so.—

So when you come into the next world, and see the lake of fire, that burneth with brimstone, the torment of the wicked, may not you find yourself mistaken, just in the same manner? **REV. JOS. MILNER.**

The Day of Judgment a day of rejoicing to the Believer.

JOYOUS, indeed, will it be to the righteous, when, rising from their graves at the voice of the archangel, they shall be hurried forward to meet their dear Lord, whom they have so longed for, coming towards them in the middle heavens, amidst surrounding myriads. While on earth, they were always meditating upon the event, and preparing themselves for it; but so weak their faith, and so earthly every thing about them, that imagination did but gasp in its efforts to conceive it, like one panting for breath when the lungs have lost the power of action.

But as imagination will thus put forth itself in feeble attempts to explore unveiled glories, let us go on as we may to ruminate on the joy of this event to those who love the Lord, and love his appearing.

Now, then, on first opening their eyes, like new-born infants, they behold with equal wonder and delight, a new scene of things spread before them. No longer such things as this world is made of, hills and vales, wood and water, fields and houses, shops and markets, men and horses, dragging through this poor life, with little that can be called pleasure, and abundance of pain; but a most captivating novelty fills them with amazement and delight, beholding the wondrous change in themselves, in each other, and in all about

them. They know neither where nor what they are: yet do they already feel inconceivably happy; and will hardly believe, for joy, that the day is come. 'Is that day,' they will cry, 'we have been so long waiting for indeed come? We never seemed to ourselves to believe it would come at all, notwithstanding all the assurances we had of it: its remoteness seemed like that of a star in the heavens, never to be reached. But yesterday things were as they had been from the beginning; and, much as we longed for the end of things, we knew not how to look to the end. To-day behold, to our inexpressible joy, the end is come. We used to talk of the fulfilling of this and the other prophecy, yet could we not clearly see any of them fulfilled to our heart's content. But now, indeed, we see all things fulfilled. How often have we talked of *old things passing away, and all things becoming new; of new heavens and a new earth!* How often used we to read with delight of God's inexpressible love to his people, and *freed*, as we used to call it, upon the precious promises! But could we have conceived how precious those things were they promised to us, they would even then have been ten thousand times more so. O, we seem to ourselves to have been very unbelievers; to have had, in a manner, no faith at all, even in its most lively exercises—no fervour in our prayers—no love in our hearts—no devotion in our lives, when such things as these were to be the result! Where was the faith, where the love, where the humility, self-abasement, submission in any degree proportionate to the claims of that most holy God, in whose sight the heavens themselves are not pure? What visions of glory do we behold! What unutterable things do we hear! What rapturous delight do we seem to drink in at every pore! Our whole souls, yea, and our bodies too, every sense, every faculty, seems to be expanded with rapture. Now, indeed, do we behold that adorable Goodness, who seemed always in his very nature impervious to sight. Now do we behold Him—his own unveiled self—seen by the newly adapted powers bestowed upon us for seeing things utterly invisible in the days of our flesh. For though he was even then hid from us by nothing but our own blindness, yet was that very blindness an impenetrable veil. But now we behold spirit itself, as before we

saw nothing but the gross matter of the poor world that's gone. And he seems not to be in one place, but in all places alike. We see him within ourselves—we see him without; we see him near—afar off—every where round about us—through the interminable regions of space; and every where surrounded by vast multitudes of shining ones, all bathing, as it were, in the ocean of his glory, and drinking unextinguishable life and joy from the continual emanations of his blessed self.

‘But we are confounded and abashed at the sight of ourselves; we feel that we deserve not this exquisite happiness—which seems yet intolerable from its vastness; and we almost wonder that, from conscious shame and self-conviction, we seek not to hide ourselves from his presence. Yet, lo! instead of shunning, we seem to be drawn irresistibly towards him by the cords of his love, and have no where to hide our shame but in the folds of his garments: and there is it so strangely enveloped, that it no longer seems a reproach to ourselves. *The Saviour of sinners;—the Justifier of the ungodly;—the Resurrection and the Life;—the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;*—seems written in golden characters upon every fold. These are the very characters by which he revealed himself to us in the days of his flesh. Then were we indeed always in a manner seeking that salvation, that righteousness, that holiness which yet we never thought we had found; but lo! now, now we have found it all. Here is our salvation, our righteousness, our holiness, our joy. We have found him whom our souls love. He is indeed revealed to us now: we behold him with our eyes, and he has taken possession of our whole hearts. We talked of being new creatures before, and were indeed graciously accounted by him as such; but by reason of the worldliness and carnality of our hearts, which seemed to poison our holiest affections, and straiten us in every duty, we could never think ourselves so: but now, for the first time, we perceive ourselves to be new creatures indeed. He is revealed to us now, not in word only, or by the simple illumination of his Spirit, but by a full, complete, and total transformation into his very likeness. His righteousness and his love is in a strange manner wrought into our very substance; and it is not possible we can now ever be

separated from him. Now, indeed, beholding the glory of the Lord, are we changed into the same image; and reflecting it from ourselves, as from a mirror, we render back to him again the glory we derived from him. How does all the beauty and pageantry of the world seem to deaden and fade away into nothing! Nay, instead of admiring, we seem to loathe it, and wonder we could ever endure the sight. The gaudy trappings of worldly vanity and pride, what are they? The lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, which then we had enough to do in subduing, is now completely extinguished. Now are we indeed in heaven. Angels, and not men—we seem to be, as it were, every where at once; to have all being, in a manner, brought before us; to know every thing we look at, in its essential nature, in all its nice dependencies, subtle combinations, curious properties, by actual intuition. Nay, every thing seems to be brought within us; we know not how—and we seem to be all as one; and he, whom our souls love, to be one with us. We feel that we have bodies, and the very bodies we once had; yet how can those vile bodies be the same with the glorious bodies we now have? What forms! what countenances! what strength! health! vigour! activity! buoyancy! We seem to tread the very heavens! to walk in the midst of stars! to see through all space! to behold every thing at once, yet every thing distinct! any part, or the whole together, as we please, to hear and converse with myriads and myriads at once—all full of joy, and full of the sweetest discourse—all distinct, yet infinitely varied—all about what *is*, and nothing about what *shall be*; as if nothing could be heard or seen more, yet nothing could be heard or seen enough;—every thing contrived to afford ceaseless everlasting delight; continual increase, without abatement; infinite variety, without change; the sweetest rest amidst ten thousand activities. Every faculty of soul and body stretched out at once, and stretched to the utmost, yet no fatigue—continual rapture, without subsequent depression; a perpetual feast, without satiety. Now we know what it is to be filled with the Spirit: it is to have our whole souls expanded to the utmost with love, and light, and joy, sent forth at once to the furthest bounds of creation, and then returning, as the blood to the heart, back to

the bosom of God. Now, indeed, do we fully comprehend all those mighty mysteries so obscurely revealed to us on earth. We see the nature of that union between the Father and the Son, and the nature of that union between the Son and us; and again, through the medium of the Son, the nature of the union between us and the Father. O what *could* we see of the glory of God in the degraded and humiliating form the Lord Jesus took upon him while he was upon earth! Under that degraded form, as assumed for our sakes, we saw indeed more of the goodness of the Lord than we could otherwise have seen; yea, it may be said that under that form alone could the glory of his goodness, by us earthlings, have been beheld at all. But it *was* a degraded form; and we well remember how difficult it was to look through it, even to those whose faith was the strongest. To many what a stumbling-block was it! It was *weakness*; it was *foolishness*. Measuring thee, O Lord, by themselves, they thought such an abasement so dishonourable to thee, that the plainest and most positive declarations of thy word ~~could not~~ bring them to yield their assent. But how is thy glory magnified, O Lord, in this abasement of thyself for the exaltation of poor degraded human nature! And how little did men consult thy glory by bringing it down to a level with their own poor ideas! But then we could see nothing clearly. We were surrounded by thy presence, and yet were unconscious of it. We knew we had access to thee by faith and prayer, through the mediation of our Great High Priest: but still thou wast in heaven, and we on earth; and though the way was open, the end seemed distant; namely, the actual manifestation of thine own glorious self. But now our eyes see thee. We see thee as thou art seen in the sanctuary. We not only see thy glory and blessedness, but we are actually ourselves partakers of it, and our joy is indeed full.'

I am aware of the vanity of such poor attempts in a wretched mortal to express the raptures of a soul in bliss. But prone as we are to please ourselves with fancies on a thousand idle subjects, may we not indulge them with advantage in imagining to our minds as well as we may the joys of the unseen world? Surely if our business is to meditate, those joys are a fit subject for the mind to act upon—at once profit-

able and pleasing. Not seeing the things themselves, feeble indeed will be our expression of the joy. But it must be remembered that we are not picturing to our minds what is merely fanciful and illusive. The joys we are so busy about are all real: our conceptions of them, indeed, falling short by all the distance between heaven and earth; yet wrong but in the feebleness of the effort to grasp the mighty truth. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

But whatever our imaginations may be, let us remember that that day, though it will speedily come, is not yet arrived; and that we are bid to look forward to it as a motive of patient endurance and strenuous exertion in this our present day of trial. O my brethren! it is only by patient continuance in well-doing, that you can have any joy in the prospect of that glorious day; for you can no otherwise have any joy in it when it comes.

There is another part of the scene not yet described, but which is referred to by our Lord himself; those wretched and melancholy souls placed at his left hand. Far off to the left, we may suppose, of him and his blessed company, may be seen another set, desecrated no otherwise than by the force of contrast. Because these blessed ones seem enshrined, as it were, in all the brilliancy of the light of heaven, therefore yon gloomy cloud of melancholy souls is rendered visible by its own darkness. But it will not long be visible: for like a grumbling tempest, that has spent its force, it is sinking fast down into the unblessed regions of eternal night. These are they, who, while upon earth, thought only of an earthly provision, but made none for heaven. Unrenewed, ungracious, unsanctified, they had, according to the parable, no oil in their lamps. They had no devotion in their hearts—no zeal, no faith, no love to God, no wish to please him, no charity, no feeling, fellow-feeling, Christian feeling; nothing but what is sordid, selfish, sensual, earthly, devilish. They had no hungering and thirsting after righteousness, no humility, no right consciousness of sin, no true penitence; no convincing need of the Saviour, and no love to him; no longing for heaven as their home, and for God as their portion; but, on the contrary, nothing but hatred

for love, aversion for enjoyment, fear for hope, and melancholy bodings for exhilarating anticipations.

O that, by reflecting upon the terrors of this day, ere it come, men might be brought to a participating foresight of its joys! The prospect of these joys can alone mitigate the sorrows of life; and how greatly will it allay the sufferings of death! In the nearness of these raptures, the anticipation of which constitutes the very essence of a Christian's life, pain has been sometimes least felt when most violent. The transports which filled the bosom of the martyr, so soon to enter into the joy of his Lord, have almost deadened the sense of pain, while his body was consuming in the flames. Soon have those flames done their work; and instantly his soul, on fire only with love, mounts up from the ashes of his poor body, thus offered as the sacrifice of his faith, like the ascending smoke from the altar.

The day of the Lord is at hand. Assured by faith of its certainty, we shall see it also to be near. Let, then, the eye of faith fasten upon it as upon an object no less interesting than certain; obscured indeed at present by the foggy atmosphere through which it is seen, but near enough already to fill the whole field of our vision, and brought, as it were, apparently nearer by its own vastness.

And O how happy is it for us, that when all worldly things are not only contingent, and *may* fail, but in a very short time inevitably *will* fail—how happy is it for us that that event, so joyous to the righteous as to render all others comparatively trivial, never will and never can fail! Under this conviction, well may they endure all their trials with patience for the Lord's sake, knowing assuredly that *yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

REV. W. GILPIN.

The Glory and Completeness of the Spiritual Temple.

IN order to describe our privileges still further, according to the design of the Holy Spirit in the text, Eph. ii. 19-22, let us ANTICIPATE THE FINISHING OF THE TEMPLE.

Suppose, then, the period arrived, when the scaffolding is struck down and the rubbish moved away: that is, suppose this earth, which was the stage for its erection,

now removed from beneath it, and the wicked, the refuse of mankind, cast far away out of sight. Conceive that you see nothing but the building. Lo! it stands high in view, for the admiration of the surrounding universe. *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof: mark ye well her bulwarks: consider her palaces—that ye may tell it to the generation following,* Ps. xlviii. 12, 13. What is her foundation? The Rock of Ages! Who is her inhabitant?—her inhabitant is God! Not a flaw, not a blemish is to be seen: every stone is in its proper place; and all contributing to the beauty of the whole! No want of symmetry in the general outline and plan—nothing imperfect in the execution of each part. Behold it stands an eternal monument, to the glory of God, of his power, and wisdom, and grace! It is all bright and glorious, wherever you take your view of it—radiating in every part with the beamings of divine glory! Her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper! It is a temple of souls! every stone is a living soul, a blood-bought spirit! Every one is a chosen warrior, who has fought his battle in his days, and has conquered! They have come out of great tribulation to be stones for this building! Affliction gave them their polish; and the cement which unites them is love!

But while we admire its beauty, let not the suspicion arise, that any thing should happen to mar its form or impair its glory. Earthly fabrics have, indeed, every thing to fear from the effects of inclement skies: for they must all, in their turn, become like those ancient cities, where thorns come up in the palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof—where the mouldering arches and half-remaining walls shew the devastating hand of time. But our Zion hath nought to fear from time, for time ceases when her glory begins: and though she must be exposed to the storm and beating of the rain, during the dark watches of the night; yet when the morning of the resurrection cometh, it will be as clear sunshine after rain, *even a morning without clouds*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. As she shall suffer by no natural causes of dissolution, so neither shall she fall by hostile violence. It was truly said by Christ to those who spoke of the temple at Jerusalem, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, that the day should

come upon her when one stone should not be left upon another, which should not be thrown down : but it shall not be so with our spiritual temple. Even now we may ask, *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* Even now we may look at her foundation and ask,

What shall shake thy sure repose?

Resting on him, she mocks the assaults of besiegers, even in her weakness : but when the day of her perfection is come, the very sound of the shoutings of her enemies can be heard no more. Satan and his agents must first break through their chains of darkness, ere they can again plant their engines against her. *In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee,* Isa. liv. 14.

REV. H. MARTYN.

The Happiness of Heaven.

THE happiness of heaven is so great that it cannot be fully known till it be fully enjoyed. It is a remaining rest, an inaccessible light, fresh and overflowing pleasures, an incorruptible crown, an eternal kingdom, too much for me to utter, or you to conceive. But nevertheless, if the sight and full fruition of God, if the society of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect, if everlasting songs of praises and hallelujahs, if eternal raptures and ecstasies can be accounted a supporting and an all-sufficing good, all these serve to extol the all-sufficiency of Christ our Saviour, who can bestow upon us this ravishing, satisfying joy and glory. God is now to us the spring-head and fountain of all our mercies and comforts, and we lie below at the fall of this spring, and draw refreshments from him only through the conduit-pipes of providences and ordinances, and live upon second-hand enjoyments; but in heaven we shall be laid close to the fountain itself, and drink in divine communications as they flow immediately from God, without having them deadened and flattened in the conveyance. Now we behold him through a glass darkly, then we shall see him face to face, see him as he is, and know him as we are known by him: and if it causeth now such raptures of joy in us, when he sometimes darts in half a glance of his eye upon the soul, Oh then! within what bounds can our joy contain itself, when we shall con-

stantly fix our eye upon God, and steadfastly behold his face—that face from which the most glorious angels, as conscious of their own unworthiness to behold, cover and veil their own? If now when God gives us some glorious discoveries of himself, we are ready to faint and melt down under them; certainly in heaven, when we shall lie under the glorious rays of the Deity beating so fully upon us, it is so great that there were no living there, did not the same God strengthen as well as fill our capacities. This is that beatifical vision, that heaven of heavens, that glory wherein the angels are satisfied, that sight wherein God shall bestow upon us a clearer eye than that of faith, and be always present with us in a nearer way than that of comfort. This is that all-sufficient and all-satisfying state which the Lord Jesus Christ can and will bring all his unto;—a state of inconceivable and endless felicity, far surmounting in glory, whatever our narrow conceptions can now apprehend,—a state wherein we shall for ever join with angels in singing praises to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us with his own blood, and manifested himself to be an all-sufficient Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, purchasing so great and glorious an inheritance for them, and bringing them to the possession of it.

BP. HOPKINS.

The certainty of Future Glory to the Believer.

LET us strengthen our belief of the blessed state after death. Divine truths lose their influence and efficacy when they are not steadfastly believed. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence or conviction of things not seen,* Heb. xi. 1. The Spirit confirms our faith, not by a pure physical act, but by convincing reason of the truth of the Gospel. The life of Christ, so glorious in holiness; his doctrine, so becoming the wisdom and other excellent attributes of the Deity; his miracles, so great, numerous, open, and beneficial, not merely to surprise the spectators with astonishment, but to touch their hearts; his death, foretold by the prophets, and exactly agreeing in all the circumstances of the predictions; his resurrection, the most noble operation of the divine power; are the strongest proofs that what he has revealed as the counsel of God for our redemption, and the pre-

parations of glory for the saints in heaven, are divine truths. And the efficacy of the Spirit of Christ in sanctifying his disciples in all ages, is a continual and as satisfying an argument that the Gospel is derived from God, the Fountain of truth, as extraordinary miracles; for holiness is as inseparable a property of the divine nature as omnipotence, and the sanctification of the soul as divine an effect as the resurrection of the body. Now in the Gospel God enters into covenant with obedient believers, to be their God; a title and relation that, supposing them the most happy here, all the enjoyments of this world cannot fulfil. This covenant is not dissolved by death, for he uses this style *after the death of his faithful servants*; and from hence it follows they are partakers of his glory and joys in the next life; for the honor of his veracity is most dear to him. The Psalmist declares that he has *magnified his word above all his name*. No perfections of his nature are more sacred and inviolable than his truth. The foundations of nature shall be overturned, and the most solid parts of the creation destroyed, but his promises shall be completely accomplished. We are assured by his infallible authority, that *there remaineth a rest for the people of God*. And he that receiveth this testimony sets to his seal that God is true; honors the truth of God's word, and binds himself more firmly to his service, and is encouraged to leave this sensible world for that which is infinitely better. Our confidence and patience in well-doing, and in suffering the utmost evil to nature, is from the pregnant apprehensions of the reality of eternal things. *We know*, saith the Apostle, *that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, 2 Cor. v. 1. This fortified him against the terrors of death. When Stephen saw the heavens open, and the Son of God ready to receive him, with what courage and constancy did he encounter the bloody rage of his murderers! Faith supplies the want of vision; it pierces the clouds, opens a window in heaven, sees the crowns of righteousness prepared for the saints, and sweetens the bitterest passage to it. But if our faith be weak and wavering, our courage will decline in the needful hour. It is with Christians, in their last passage from earth to heaven, as with

St. Peter walking upon the waters to Christ; whilst his faith was firm in Christ, he went upon the waves as on the firm land; but upon the rising of a storm, his faith sunk into fear, and he sunk into the waters; till our Saviour upon his earnest prayer, *Lord, save me*, took hold of him, and raised him with that compassionate reproof, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Matt. xiv. 31.

DR. BATES.

The Heavenly Glory through the Mercy of God, and not by human merit.

THE designing, the preparation, and actual bestowing of the heavenly glory, is from the mercy of God.

This will appear by considering, that it is absolutely impossible that a mere creature, though perfect, should deserve any thing from God; for enjoying its being and powers of working from his goodness, the product of all is entirely due to him, and the payment of a debt acquires no title to a reward. He is the Proprietary and Lord of all by creation. Hence it is clear, that in the order of distributive justice nothing can be challenged from him.

Besides, such is the infinite perfection of God in himself, that no benefit can redound to him by the service of the creature. *When ye shall have done all, say we are unprofitable servants, for we have done but what we ought to do*, Luke xvii. 10. The neglect of our duty justly exposes to punishment; but the performance of it deserves no reward, because no advantage accrues to God by it. *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Rom. xi. 35. He challenges all creatures, even of the highest order. To speak strictly therefore, when God crowns the angels with glory, he gives what is merely his own, and does not render what is theirs. If he should leave them in their pure nature or deprive them of their being, he were no loser, nor injurious to them; for what law binds him to enrich them with immortal glory, who are no ways profitable to him, or to preserve that being they had from his unexcited goodness? No creature can give to him, therefore none can receive from him by way of valuable consideration.

There is no proportion between the best works of men and the excellency of the reward, much less an equivalence. It was the just and humble acknowledgment of

Jacob to God, *I am less than the least of all thy mercies*, those that common providence dispenses for the support and refreshment of this temporal life; but how much less than the glorious excellencies of the supernatural, divine life, wherein the saints reign with God for ever! The most costly, the most difficult and hazardous services are equally nothing in point of merit, with the giving but a cup of cold water to a disciple of Christ, there being no correspondence in value between them and the kingdom of heaven. The Apostle tells us, *I reckon that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 18; and suffering is more than doing. God rewards his faithful servants, not according to the dignity of their works, but his own liberality and munificence. . . . And the clearest notion of the Deity is, that he is a Being infinite in all perfections; therefore all-sufficient and most willing to make his creatures completely happy.

If a creature perfectly holy, that never sinned, is incapable to merit any thing from God, much less can those who are born in a sinful state, and guilty of innumerable actual transgressions, pretend to deserve any reward for their works. This were presumption inspired by prodigious vanity; for by his most free grace they are restored in conversion to that spiritual power by which they serve him. The chaos was not a deader lump before the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, than the best of men were before the vital influences of the Spirit wrought upon them. And for this they are so deeply obliged to God, that if a thousand times more for his glory were performed, yet they cannot discharge what they owe. The continuance and increase of the powerful supplies of grace to the saints, who even since their holy calling by many lapses have justly deserved that God should withdraw his grieved Spirit, are new obligations to thankfulness; and the more grace the less merit. The best works of men are imperfect, allayed with the mixtures of infirmities, and not of full weight in the divine balance. If God should strictly examine our righteousness, it will be found neither pure nor perfect in his eyes, and, without favor and indulgence, would be rejected; and that which wants pardon, cannot deserve praise and glory. He shows *mercy unto thou-*

sands of them that love him and keep his commandments, Exod. xx. 6. If obedience were meritorious, it were strict justice to reward them. The Apostle prays for Onesiphorus, who had exposed himself to great danger for his love to the Gospel, *the Lord grant that he may find mercy in that day*, 2 Tim. i. 18. The divine mercy gives the crown of life to the faithful in the day of eternal recompense.

The meritorious cause of our obtaining heaven is the obedience of Jesus Christ, comprehending all that he did and suffered to reconcile God to us. From him as the Eternal Word we have all benefits in the order of nature; *for all things were made by him* and for him, as the incarnate Word, all good things in the order of grace. What we enjoy in time and expect in eternity is by Him. DR. BATES.

Reasonableness for delighting in the Thoughts of our Heavenly Rest.

Is there such a rest remaining for us? Why then are our thoughts no more upon it? Why are not our hearts continually there? Why dwell we not there in constant contemplation? What is the cause of this neglect? Are we reasonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us such a glory, and promised to take us up to dwell with himself, and is not this worth thinking on? Should not the strongest desires of our hearts be after it? Do we believe this, and yet forget and neglect it? If God will not give us leave to approach this light, what means all his earnest invitations? Why doth he condemn our earthly-mindedness, and command us to set our affections on things above? Ah, vile hearts! If God were against it, we were likelier to be for it; but when he commands our hearts to heaven, then they will not stir one inch: like our predecessors, the sinful Israelites; when God would have them march for Canaan, then they mutiny, and will not stir; but when God bids them not go, then they will be presently marching. If God say, *Love not the world, nor the things of the world*; we dote upon it. How freely, how frequently can we think of our pleasures, our friends, our labours, our flesh and its lusts; yea, our wrongs and miseries, our fears and sufferings! But where is the Christian, whose heart is on his rest? What is the matter? Are we so full of joy, that we need no more?

Or is there nothing in heaven for our joyous thoughts? Or rather, are not our hearts carnal and stupid? Let us humble these sensual carnal hearts that have in them no more of Christ and glory. . . . I require thee, as ever thou hopest for a part in this glory, that thou presently take thy heart to task, chide it for its wilful strangeness to God, turn thy thoughts from the pursuit of vanity, bend thy soul to study eternity, busy it about the life to come, habituate thyself to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory, but bathe thy soul in heaven's delights; and if thy backward soul begin to flag, and thy thoughts to scatter, call them back, hold them to their work, bear not with their laziness, nor connive at one neglect. And when thou hast, in obedience to God, tried this work, got acquainted with it, and kept a guard on thy thoughts till they are accustomed to obey, thou wilt then find thyself in the suburbs of heaven, and that there is, indeed, a sweetness in the work and way of God, and that the life of Christianity is a life of joy. Thou wilt meet with those abundant consolations which thou hast prayed, panted, and groaned after, and which so few Christians do ever here obtain, because they know not this way to them, or else make not conscience of walking in it. Say not, 'We are unable to set our own hearts on heaven; this must be the work of God only.' Though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves. Though without Christ you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much, and must, or else it will be undone, and yourselves undone through your neglect. Christians, if your souls were healthful and vigorous, they would perceive incomparably more delight and sweetness in the believing joyful thoughts of your future blessedness, than the soundest stomach finds in its food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects; so little painful would this work be to you.

BAXTER.

Our stable peace, our solid tranquillity, our perpetual security, is in the world to come: in this world we wage a daily war with our spiritual enemies; we have no rest. If one sin be subdued, another is up in arms. We are continually exposed to temptations; but the divine laws forbid us

to yield to them. Surely, amidst such constant pressures, we ought to be joyful in the prospect of hastening to Christ by a speedy departure. How does our Lord himself instruct us on this very head? *Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Who does not wish to be free from sorrow? Who would not run to take possession of joy? Since then to see Christ is joy, and since our joy cannot be full till we do see HIM, what blindness, what infatuation is it, to love the penal pressures and tears of the world, and not to be desirous of quickly partaking of that joy which shall never pass away!

The cause of this is UNBELIEF. We none of us believe really and solidly those things to be true which the God of truth promises, whose word is eternally firm to those that put their trust in him. If a man of a grave and respectable character promises you any thing, you do not doubt his performance, because you know him to be faithful. Now God himself speaks with you, and dare you waver in uncertainty? He promises you immortality when you shall depart out of this world; and will you still doubt? This is not to know God. This is to offend, with the sin of unbelief, Christ the Lord and Master of believers: *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, said the blessed Apostle; who computed it to be gain indeed, no longer to be detained in the snares of the world, no longer to be obnoxious to sin and the flesh, to be exempt from excruciating pressures, to be freed from the power of Satan, and, lastly, to go to the joys of eternal salvation upon the call of Christ.

CYPRIAN.

Considerations for our longing for the coming of Christ.

OH! what is this world that you should be fond of it, and cling to it with so much eagerness? How long are all these enjoyments that are peculiar to it; and how many its vexations, its snares, and its sorrows? Review your pilgrimage thus far; and though you must acknowledge that goodness and mercy have attended you all the days of your life, Psal. xxiii. 6, yet has not that very mercy itself planted some thorns in your paths, and given you some wise and necessary, yet painful intimations, that this is not your rest? Mic. ii.

10. Review the monuments of your withered joys, of your blasted hopes; if there be yet any monuments of them remaining, more than a mournful remembrance they have left behind in your afflicted heart. Look upon the graves that have swallowed up many of your dearest and most amiable friends, perhaps in the very bloom of life, and in the greatest intimacy of your converse with them; and reflect, that if you hold it out a few years more, death will renew its conquests at your expense, and devour the most precious of those that yet survive.—View the living, as well as the dead; behold the state of human nature, under the many grievous marks of its apostacy from God; and say, whether a wise and good man would wish to continue always here. Methinks were I myself secure from being reached by any of the arrows that fly around me, I could not but mourn to see the wounds that are given by them, and to hear the groans of those that are continually falling under them. The diseases and calamities of mankind are so many, and which is most grievous of all, the distempers of the mind are so various, and so threatening, that the world appears almost like an hospital: and a man, whose heart is tender, is ready to feel his spirits broken, as he walks through it and surveys the sad scene; especially when he sees how little he can do for the recovery of those whom he pities. Are you a Christian, and does it not pierce your heart to see how human nature is sunk in vice and in shame? To see with what amazing insolence some are making themselves openly vile, and how the name of Christ is dishonoured by many too that call themselves his people? to see the unlawful deeds and filthy practices of them that live ungodly, and to behold at the same time the infirmities at least, and irregularities of those concerning whom we have better hopes? And do you not wish to escape from such a world, where a righteous and compassionate soul must be vexed from day to day by so many spectacles of sin and misery? 2 Pet. ii. 8.

Yea, to come nearer home. . . . Do you not feel a remainder of indwelling sin; the sad consequence of the original revolt of our nature from God? Are you not struggling every day with some residué of corruption, or at least mourning on account of the weakness of your graces? Do you not often find your spirits dull and languid,

when you would desire to raise them to the greatest fervor in the service of God? Do you not find your hearts too often insensible of the richest instances of his love, and your hands feeble in his service, even when to will is present with you? Rom. vii.

18. Does not your life, in its best days and hours, appear a low unprofitable thing, when compared with what you are sensible it ought to be, and with what you wish that it were? Are you not frequently, as it were, stretching the pinions of the mind, and saying, *Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest?* Psal. lv. 6.

Should you not then rejoice in the thought, that Jesus comes to deliver you from these complaints?—That he comes to answer your wishes, and to fulfil the largest desires of your hearts; those desires that he himself has inspired? That he comes to open upon you a world of purity and joy, of active, exalted, and unwearied services?

O Christian, how often have you cast a longing eye towards those happy shores, and wished to pass the sea, the boisterous, unpleasant, dangerous sea, that separates you from them? When your Lord has condescended to make you a short visit in his ordinances on earth, how have you blessed the time and the place, and pronounced it, amidst any other disadvantage of situation, to be the very gate of heaven? Gen. xxviii.

17. And is it so delightful to behold this gate, and will it not be much more to enter into it? Is it so delightful to receive the visits of Jesus for an hour, and will it not be infinitely more so to dwell with him for ever? Lord, may you well say, When I dwell with thee I shall dwell in holiness; for thou thyself art holiness; I shall dwell in love, for thou thyself art love; I shall dwell in joy, for thou art the fountain of joy, as *thou art in the Father, and the Father in thee*, John xvii. 21. Bid welcome to his approach, therefore, to take you at your word, and to fulfil to you that saying of his, on which your soul has so often rested with heavenly peace and pleasure; *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me*, John xvii. 24.

Surely you may see in this view, 'the sooner Christ comes, the better.' What though the residue of your days be cut off in the midst? What though you leave

many expected pleasures in life untasted, and many schemes unaccomplished? Is it not enough, that what is taken from a mortal life shall be added to a glorious eternity; and that you shall spend those days and years in the presence and service of Christ in heaven, which you might otherwise have spent with him and for him in the imperfect enjoyments and labours of earth?

DODDRIDGE.

Considerations on the moment of Death.

WE ought seriously to consider all which is to pass in that moment of death, for which the time of this life was only bestowed upon us; and upon which depends the eternity of the other. O most dreadful point, which art the end of time, and beginning of eternity! O most fearful instant, which shuttest up the prefixed term of this life, and determinest the business of our salvation! how many things are to pass in thee! In the same instant life is to finish, all our works to be examined; and that sentence given, which is to be executed for all eternity. O last moment of life! O first of eternity! how terrible is the thought of thee, since in thee not only life is to be lost, but to be accounted for, and we then to enter into a region which we know not; in that moment I shall cease to live, in that moment I shall behold my Judge, who shall lay all my sins open before me, with all their weight, number, and enormity. In it I shall receive a strict charge of all the Divine benefits bestowed upon me; and in it a judgment shall pass upon me, either for my salvation, or damnation eternal! . . .

There are three things which would make a sinner tremble: The first, when his soul is to be plucked out of his body; the second, when it is to appear before God to receive judgment; and the third, when sentence is to be pronounced. How terrible, then, is this moment, wherein all these three things so terrible are to pass! Let a Christian often, whilst he lives, place himself in that instant, from whence let him behold, on one part, the time of his life which he is to live; and, on the other, the eternity whereunto he enters; and let him consider what remains unto him of that, and what he hopes for in this; in that instant a thousand years of life shall appear unto the sinner no more than one hour; and one hour of torments shall appear a

thousand years. Behold thy life from this watch-tower, from this horizon, and measure it with the eternal, and thou shalt find it of no extension.

O dreadful moment, which cuts off the thread of time, and begins the web of eternity! I will therefore provide for this moment, that I may not lose eternity; this is that precious pearl, for which I will give all that I have, or am; it shall ever be in my memory, I shall ever be solicitous of it, since it may every day come upon me.

For eternity depends upon death, death upon life, and life upon a thread, which may either be broken or cut; and that even when I most hope, and most endeavour to prolong it. My life is never secure; I will therefore ever fear that instant, which gives an end to time, and beginning to eternity.

BP. TAYLOR.

We always need the grace of the Holy Spirit. There is not an hour nor a moment in which we can be either happy or safe without it. There are, however, seasons in which our need of it is especially great and pressing. And these are the very times when the hopes of the self-deceiver perish. A day of trouble is one of them; the hour of death is another—on this side of the grave, the most appalling of all. At a distance, it is nothing; we think of it with composure; but no tongue can tell how death appears when it is close at hand. None but the dying know what it is to die. A sinking body, a receding world, a dark, lonely grave, loathsome corruption, the frightful worm—these are not trifles; they make us shiver as we think of them in connexion with a lost friend or child. But a guilty spirit, an offended God, an unknown, strange eternity—these surprise the soul by the reality which they assume; they overwhelm it by their importance.

In such an hour no slight hopes will support us. If conscience does its work, nothing but the liveliest faith, the firmest hold of the Divine promises, can give us one moment's quiet. O what an hour for all our hopes to leave us! O what a time to discover our goodness to be sin, our religion a delusion! Flesh and heart failing, the world useless, and the heaven we had so often deemed our own, out of our sight! And what is near? We know not. Nothing at which we dare to look.

But let this hour be passed—let con-

science sleep; let it be an hour of calmness—we must feel our need of the grace of Christ when it is gone. We shall be in a world of spirits: not hearing of eternity, but in it; not thinking of a judgment-seat, but trembling before it; not saying, *Is there a God?* but seeing him; not musing about heaven and hell, but standing on their borders, within a step of their pains or joys, with only a moment between us and an everlasting home.

No self-righteous hope can stand in such an hour as this. It may have rooted itself very deeply in the mind; we may have carried it about with us all our life long; it may have stood firm against many a sermon, and many a providence; it may have triumphed over the plainest declarations of the Bible, and borne unmoved the shock of death; but take it into eternity, bring it among the realities of that unseen world—where is it? It is gone. One moment has turned it into immovable despair.

REV. C. BRADLEY.

Awful prospects of the Wicked in death.

WHEN we consider that, either eternal damnation, or eternal salvation, is the instant and inseparable consequence of death; how wicked, how diabolically absurd are the jests of the infidel and the wit, when affecting to smile at that solemn event. However, with all the affected gaiety of the proud and the profane, when they come to lie on a death-bed, their mirth will forsake them, and all the boasted heroism of infidelity sink in a dreadful succession of horror and dismay. And no wonder; since

' 'Tis not *the dying*, but 'tis *this* they fear,
To be—they know not *what*, they know not *where* !'

The prospect of meeting the Lord God Almighty constitutes the bitterest dreg in the cup of the wicked, and is the most tormenting thought, in the view of their dissolution, that racks them on the verge of eternity. How would they court death, and solicit his arrival, were it not, that *after death is the judgment!* How gladly would they meet and embrace the messenger, could they but be excused from meeting that God, the light of whose countenance makes heaven, but in whose frown is hell! From a reluctance to do this arise dismal apprehensions, dreadful

impatience, torturing doubts, and a tormenting anxiety to live. All which conflict of raging and tumultuous passions, in a soul, at the article of dissolution, and upon the point of meeting God, is most beautifully described in the following striking imagery of the poet:

' In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement!
Runs to each avenue; and shrieks for help!
But shrieks in vain! How wishfully she looks
On all she's leaving, now no longer her's!
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O might she stay, to wash away her crimes,
And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
She heaves is big with horror! But the Foe,
Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close, through ev'ry lane of life,
Nor misses once the track; but presses on;
Till forced at last to the tremendous verge,
At once she sinks——' sinks into the bottomless
and gloomy gulf of everlasting darkness and death!

Awful plunge! Dreadful exit! What heart can conceive, or tongue describe, the state of an immortal soul, trembling on the brink of fate; arrested by death; the prisoner of guilt and fear; reluctant to depart, yet viewing dissolution inevitable; looking forward to eternity with painful dread, and backward upon the world with sorrow and regret; unwilling to go, yet unable to stay; soliciting a reprieve for a year, another month only, or even a week, but denied one moment's delay; putting off in imagination or in wish, what is present to sense; quitting the world, and bidding an everlasting farewell to all its enjoyments, with nothing in prospect to compensate for the loss; at length forced to launch, though sure of shipwreck; and nothing in view, but a black abyss, a fortified heaven, and an angry God! This is the end that awaits the wicked. This is the fate of those who die without Christ! Oh that the consideration might awaken the fears of the careless, and prompt the people of God *to give diligence to make their calling and election sure!* 2 Pet. i. 10.

REV. R. DE COURCY.

Happy dissolution! were this the period of their woes. But, alas! all these tribulations are only *the beginning of sorrows*; a small drop only from that *cup of trembling*, which is mingled for their future portion.—No sooner has the last

pang dislodged their reluctant souls, but they are hurried into the presence of an injured, angry God. Not under the conducting care of beneficent angels, but exposed to the insults of accursed spirits; who lately *tempted* them, now upbraid them, and will for ever *torment* them.—Who can imagine their confusion and distress, when they stand, guilty and inexcusable, before their incensed Creator? They are received with frowns. The God that made them has no *mercy on them*, *Isai. xxvii. 11.* The Prince of Peace rejects them with abhorrence. He consigns them over to chains of *darkness*, and receptacles of *despair*; against the severer doom, and more public infamy of the Great Day.—Then all the vials of wrath will be emptied upon these wretched creatures. The law they have violated, and the Gospel they have slighted; the power they have defied, and the goodness they have abused; will all get themselves honour in their exemplary destruction. . . .

Resurrection will be no privilege to them; but immortality itself their everlasting curse.—Would they not bless the grave, *that land where all things are forgotten*; and wish to lie eternally hid in its deepest gloom? But the dust refuses to *conceal* their persons; or to draw a *veil* over their practices. They also must awake; must arise; must appear at the bar, and meet the Judge; a Judge, before whom the *pillars of heaven tremble, and the earth melts away*: a Judge, once long-suffering, and very compassionate; but now unalterably determined to teach stubborn offenders.—What it is, to *provoke* the Omnipotent Godhead: what it is, to *trample* upon the blood of his Son; and offer *despite* to all the gracious overtures of his Spirit.

O the perplexity! the distraction! that must seize impenitent rebels, when they are summoned to the great Tribunal!—What will they do, in this day of severe visitation? This day of final decision?—Where? How? Whence, can they find help?—To which of the saints will they turn? Whither betake themselves for shelter or for succour?—Alas! 'tis all in vain; 'tis all too late.—Friends and acquaintance know them no more. Men and angels abandon them to their approaching doom. Even the Mediator, the MEDIATOR himself, deserts them in this

dreadful hour.—To *fly* will be impracticable: to justify themselves still more impossible; and now, to make any *supplications*, utterly unavailable.

Behold! the books are opened. The secrets of all hearts are disclosed. The hidden things of darkness are brought to light. How empty, how ineffectual *now*, are all those refined *artifices*, with which hypocrites imposed upon their fellow-creatures, and preserved a character in the sight of men!—The jealous God, who has been about their path, and about their bed, and spied out all their ways, sets before them the things that they have done. They cannot answer him one in a thousand, nor stand in the awful judgment. *The heavens reveal their iniquities, and the earth rises up against them, Job xx. 27.* They are *speechless* with guilt, and *stigmatised* with infamy, before all the armies of the sky, and all the nations of the redeemed. What a favour would they esteem it to hide their ashamed heads in the bottom of the ocean; or even to be buried beneath the ruins of the tottering world!

If the contempt poured upon them be thus insupportable, how will their hearts endure, when the sword of infinite indignation is unsheathed, and fiercely waved around their defenceless heads? How must they scream with wild amazement, and rend the very heavens with their cries, when the *right-aiming thunderbolts* go abroad; go abroad, with a dreadful commission, to drive them from the kingdoms of glory; and plunge them—not into the sorrows of a moment, or the tortures of an hour—but into all the restless agonies of unquenchable fire, and everlasting despair.*

Misery of miseries! too shocking for reflection to dwell upon. But, if so dismal to *foresee*, and that at a distance, together with some comfortable expectation of escaping it—O! how bitter, inconceivably bitter, to bear, without any intermission, or any mitigation, through hopeless and eternal ages!

Who has any bowels of pity?—Who has any sentiments of compassion? Who

* Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where Peace
And Rest can never dwell; Hope never comes,
That comes to All: but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.

has any tender concern for his fellow-creatures? Who?—In God's name, and for Christ's sake, let him shew it; by warning every man, and beseeching every man, to seek the Lord while he may be found: to throw down the arms of rebellion before the act of indemnity expires; and submissively to adore the Lamb, while he holds out the golden Sceptre.

REV. J. HERVEY.

